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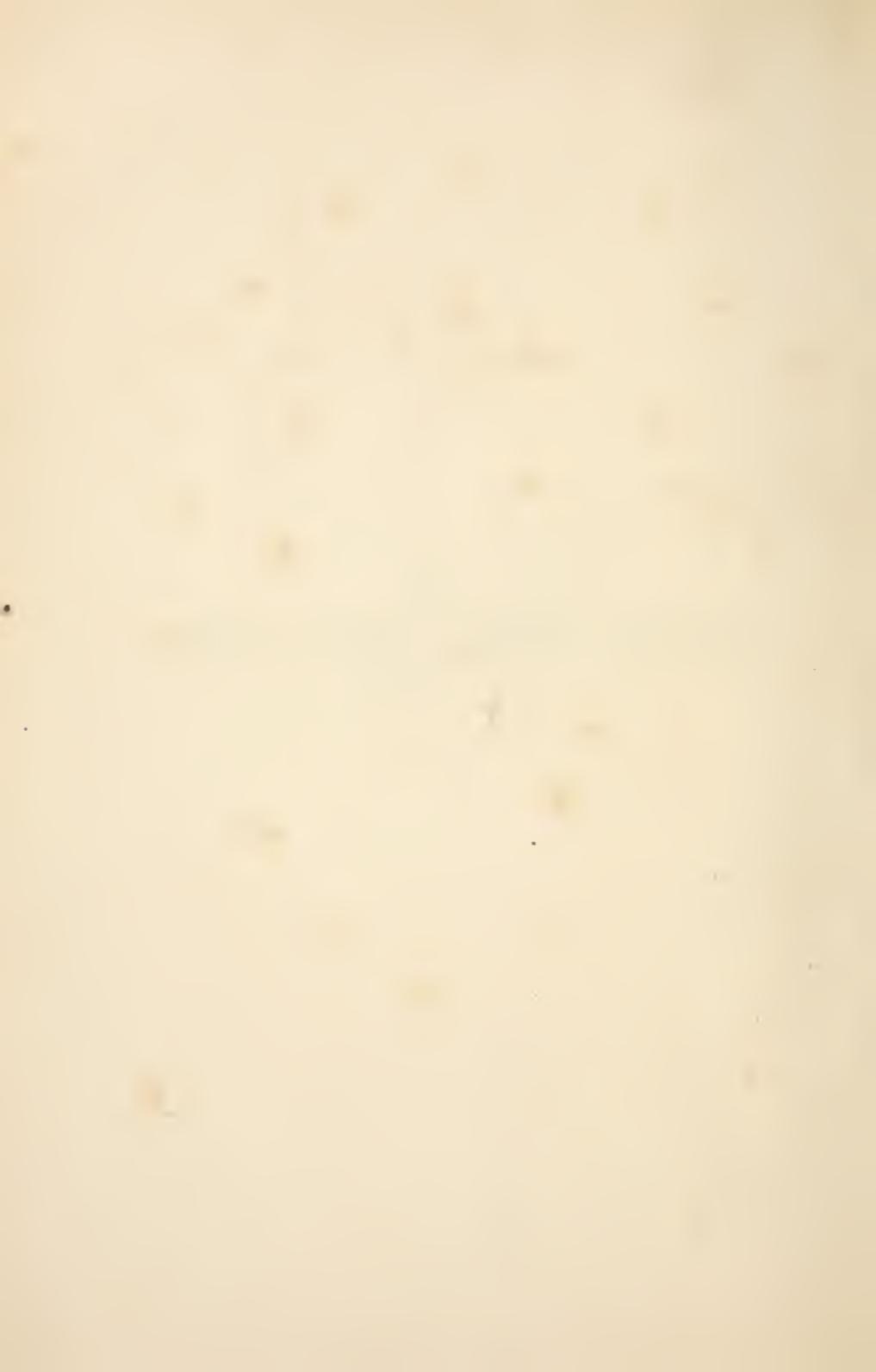
For Frankie
from his loving
Aunt Jessie

September 26th 1864

Marian Holyoke
Mrs.
Mrs. S. B. Shaw
Nov. 1887
Staten Island



MAMMA'S LESSONS ABOUT JESUS.



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MAMMA'S LESSONS

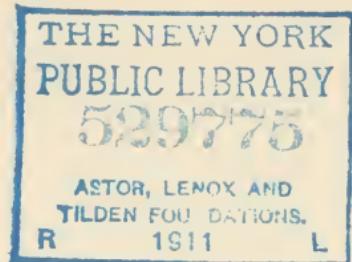
ABOUT

J E S U S.

BY A MOTHER.

NEW YORK:
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1858.

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PREFACE.

THE following simple pages were originally prepared by the Author as Bible Lessons for her own children. It has been suggested that, possibly, assistance might be afforded by them to some Christian mother whose earnest desire is that her little ones should early know the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make them wise unto salvation. Should only one such be encouraged in the blessed work she has undertaken, and seek more earnestly the unfeigned faith of Eunice of old, the Author will thank God, and take courage.

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LESSONS ABOUT JESUS.

INTRODUCTION.

DEAR CHILDREN, I know that you love to hear wonderful stories, and you often ask, “Are they quite true?” Now, many tales are written, which, though they sound very pretty, are *not* really true.

But I am going to tell you a history, far, far more wonderful than any which man could write; and yet every word of it is true. One of you asks, “How do you *know* that it is true?” Another says, “Are you quite sure of it?” Dear children, I know that what I am going to tell you is true, because it is written in God’s Word; and I am quite sure it is true, because “God, who cannot lie” (Titus i. 2), put it into the hearts of

holy men of old to write it. (2 Peter i. 21). Are you longing to know what it is I am going to tell you? Listen, then, and I will tell you of a great and wonderful King, "The King of kings, and Lord of lords," (Rev. xix. 16), who left His throne in heaven, and came down to earth to die.

For whom? For you, dear children, yes, *for you*, that you might be made the children of God, and at last be taken to be with Him, and like Him, for ever! Are you like God now? Oh, no! Think of all your naughty tempers, your self-will, your disobedience, and I am sure you will say, "Indeed, I am not." Well, but how is this? Have you not read, that when God made man, He made him in His own image? (Gen. i. 27.) Yes, but you know too that Adam and Eve sinned. Then they lost the image of God, and from that sad day, every little child that has been born into the world has been "born in sin, and shapen in iniquity" (Ps. li. 5), that is, it has been born with an evil heart, and a sinful nature.

You have this sinful nature, this evil heart. Now you know, none but “the *pure in heart* shall see God” (Matt. v. 8); so that, even if you had never really *done* anything naughty, you could not hope to live with God in heaven. But, oh! you have often sinned against God; yes, every hour of every day.

God says, “The soul that sinneth it shall die.” (Ezek. xviii. 20.) *Not die* so as to have no feeling. Oh! no, but be for ever and ever banished from the presence of God, and sent to dwell—yes, to dwell for ever—with Satan and his dreadful angels in hell. *There* the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. (Mark ix. 48.) Do you not tremble as you hear these words? It is right you *should* see how God hates sin; but, now, is it not very wonderful to you to hear that, much as He hates sin, God loves the poor sinner?—yes, *so* loves him—you know that sweet text, “God so loved the world that He gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have ever-

lasting life." (John iii. 16.) And again, "God commendeth his love to us, in that while we were yet sinners CHRIST died for us." (Romans v. 8.)

Yes, CHRIST died that we might *not* die. Do you say, "This *is* wonderful; and now all will be saved—none will die that dreadful death"?

Just repeat that part of the text, "that who-soever *believeth* in Him should not perish;" and in another passage JESUS says, "Him that *cometh* to me I will in nowise cast out." Now, dear children, have you "*come*" to JESUS? Have you prayed earnestly to Him that his precious blood may wash away not only the sins you are always committing, but the sin of your nature too? And have you "*believed*" in JESUS—that is, have you felt that He will really do this in answer to your earnest prayer? Ah! if you have, it will soon be seen. Do you say, "How can what passes inside my heart be seen by people around me?" Dear children, if you really believe that JESUS has saved you from hell, you love Him; and if you

love Him, you will do what He commands you. You will become meek and gentle, instead of passionate and hasty ; you will strive to be obedient and submissive, and in all things you will *desire* to be made *like CHRIST*. I say you will *desire*, for this will not come all at once. But if once the Holy Spirit begins to work in your heart, you will, by little and little, cast off all naughty ways, and every year you will grow in grace, and become more fit to live with JESUS in heaven.

You will ask me when I am going to begin the wonderful history I promised you. I will begin it at once ; and I am sure you have long before this found out that it is the history of the life and death of our dear Saviour, the LORD JESUS CHRIST. While you hear it, may you learn to love Him more and more, to long for his coming again, and to say, “Come, LORD JESUS, come quickly.”

CHAPTER I.

JESUS IN THE MANGER AT BETHLEHEM.

I DARE say you think that Adam and Eve were very unhappy after they had sinned; and no doubt they were. All was sadly changed with them. They were no longer in the beautiful Garden of Eden. They had to work hard, for thorns and weeds had begun to grow. Their bodies, too, were changed; they suffered pain and weakness, and they knew that they must die. (Gen. iii. 19.) But, in the midst of all their sorrow and trouble, God was very gracious to them. He gave them a sweet promise. (Gen. iii. 15.) You will understand the words of that promise when you are older. It meant that JESUS would one day come into the world to destroy the wicked tempter, Satan, and to save sinful man. Hundreds and hundreds of years rolled away. Almost the whole world was

living in sin; but God had always a few people who loved and served Him. To comfort them, God repeated his promise of a Saviour from time to time. At last, four thousand years after Adam had sinned, the fulness of the time was come when God would send forth his dear Son. (Gal. iv. 4.) No doubt many people were looking and waiting for Him; but they little thought *how* He would come.

In the city of Nazareth lived a good and humble woman, named Mary. One day when she was alone in her house, an angel came to her. Mary was much frightened when she saw him. "Fear not, Mary," said the angel, "the Lord is with thee." He then told her that she should have a son, who should be called "the Son of God." (Luke i. 35.) Gabriel (that was the angel's name) then left Mary, and she understood that she was really to be the mother of the Saviour so long promised. She sung for joy; and you often hear her sweet hymn of praise at church in the Afternoon Service.

Now you will see how every word of GOD came true. There was in the land of Judea a little village called Bethlehem. A prophet named Micah had been inspired 710 years before CHRIST came to tell the Jews that in that village JESUS should be born. (Micah v. 2.) But you will ask me how this was to be, when Mary lived at Nazareth. You will hear. Although Mary and her husband, Joseph, lived at Nazareth, Bethlehem was Joseph's own city. Now, many years before, the Jews had been conquered by the Romans; and just at this time the Emperor made a law that every one should go to his own city to be taxed, that is, to pay some money, because they were his subjects. As Bethlehem was the city of Joseph, he had to go there to be taxed, and Mary went with him. There was only one little inn at Bethlehem, and that was quite full before Mary and Joseph got there. What were they to do? Where could they rest after their journey? They could find no place but the stable. Here the blessed JESUS was born! And

where could He be laid? for Mary had no cradle or bed for Him. Wrapped in swaddling clothes, the Heavenly Infant was laid in the manger! Well, dear children, is not this a wonderful story? Do you not think, if the people of the inn had known that the Lord of glory was cradled in their manger, they would have made room for Him? But though *they* did not know, God sent angels to tell of the birth of his own dear Son. And to whom do you think He sent them? Was it to the Roman Emperor, who was so rich and grand? Oh, no! that same night some humble shepherds were out in the field watching their flocks. Suddenly they saw a very bright light, brighter than they had ever seen before. Before they had time to think what this light could be, an angel spoke to them,—“Fear not,” said the angel, “for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy.” He then told them that a Saviour, CHRIST the Lord, had been born that day at Bethlehem; and, that they might know the blessed babe when they found Him, he said,

“Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.” While the angel was speaking, thousands and thousands of heavenly voices were heard singing. Never was such music heard on earth before. And what was their song? “Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good will to men.” As soon as their sweet song of praise was ended, the angels went back into heaven.

Then the poor shepherds said one to another, “Let us now go even to Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass.” (Luke ii. 15.) Though it was late at night, they set off with haste. Soon they found the stable, and, going in, they saw the Saviour, and worshipped Him. But the shepherds were not the only visitors to the stable of Bethlehem.

In a country a long way to the east of Judea, lived some very wise and learned men. One day, these men noticed in the heavens a star much larger and brighter than any they had seen before. They thought this beautiful star must be

meant to show that some wonderful person was born. They knew that the Jews were expecting JESUS to come to be their king, so they set off at once ; and when they got to Jerusalem, they began to ask, “Where is He that is born King of the Jews?” (Matthew ii. 2.) Now a wicked king, named Herod, had been set up to rule over the poor Jews. When he heard the wise men ask about a king of the Jews, he was much troubled. Why, do you think? He was afraid if JESUS was born to be King of the Jews, *he* should be put down from being king. First, he called together the scribes and chief priests, who were most likely to know what was written by the prophets about JESUS, and asked them, “Where it was said he should be born?” They told him “in Bethlehem.” And then, oh! such a wicked thought came into his heart. He thought he would kill JESUS! But he did not know where JESUS was ;—how could he find out? He thought of a plan. Calling the wise men to him, he told them to go and find JESUS, and then

come back and tell him. He pretended that he wished to worship Him. So the wise men set off; and, lo, the bright star which they had seen in their own country moved on before them, till at last it stood still over the very place in which the Saviour was. Oh, how delighted they were! Now they did not mind having taken such a long journey. "They rejoiced with exceeding great joy." They worshipped JESUS, and brought out gold and sweet spices which they offered to Him. But the time came when they must go home. What were they to do? Were they to go and tell the wicked Herod where they had found the Saviour? No. GOD spoke to them in a dream, so they went back to their own country another way, and did not go near Jerusalem. Herod waited until he was sure they never meant to come to him. Then, in a great rage, he sent out men to kill every little child in Bethlehem, or near Bethlehem, who was less than two years old. And now he felt quite sure that he had killed JESUS; but had he? Oh, no; GOD had spoken



B. BOBBITT. sc.



in a dream to Joseph, and had told him to take Mary and the infant into the land of Egypt. Joseph did as God commanded. He took the young child and his mother by night, and went into Egypt. There they staid until Herod was dead. You will not be surprised to hear that he died soon after in the most dreadful suffering and misery. We do not read this in the Bible, but in a history, which was afterwards written by a clever man named Josephus. As soon as Herod was dead, God spoke again to Joseph in a dream, and told him to return to the land of Israel. When he found that Herod's wicked son was king, he was frightened to go near the part of the country where he lived. But God again spoke to him, and he turned aside into the parts of Galilee, and went to live at Nazareth.

Now there are three things in this history, in which God's word was shown to be true. The Prophet Jeremiah had said 600 years before, that many poor mothers in Ramah, (*that* was near Bethlehem) would weep and mourn for

their dear babies. (Jer. xxxi. 15.) And do you not think those poor mothers, whose darling little ones were killed by Herod, would cry bitterly? Oh! yes, they "would not be comforted, because their little ones were not." (Matt. ii. 18.)

Again, nearly 800 years before, God had spoken these words by his prophet Hosea, "Out of Egypt have I called my Son." (Hosea xi. 1.) And did not God call his Son out of Egypt when Herod was dead? And again, it was said by the prophets, "he shall be called a Nazarene." (Matt. ii. 25.) I have just told you that JESUS went to live with Joseph and his mother at Nazareth. I want you, dear children, to learn to love God's word for its wonderful truthfulness, as well as for the many sweet and precious things in it.

When JESUS was eight days old, and before He was taken away from Bethlehem, He was circumcised. *Circumcision* was used by the Jews, just as we use *baptism*. Abraham, you know, was the father of all the Jews. God had

commanded him to be circumcised, and every little baby boy among the Jews, after that, was circumcised when he was eight days old. At the same time the parents used to give their little boys a name. Perhaps you may remember, if ever you had a little baby brother or sister, that it was not quite certain for some time what its name would be. But at last, after talking about it a good deal, your parents fixed upon a name.

Do you think *Mary* would find it difficult to fix upon a name for *her* baby? Oh, no! And why? God had fixed *that* long ago. When the angel Gabriel came from heaven, to tell Mary that she should have a son, he said, “Thou shalt call his name *Jesus*.” (Luke i. 31.) And after that, when God spoke to Joseph in a dream about Mary having this son, He said, “And thou shalt call his name *Jesus*.” Now I want you to remember, that JESUS means a *Saviour*. Learn this little verse before we go on, “Thou shalt call his name JESUS, *for* He shall save his people from their sins.” (Matt. i. 21.) Now

you will understand how it was that Mary called her child her Saviour. In her sweet song of praise, you know, she said, "My spirit has rejoiced in God *my Saviour.*" What a sweet name this makes the name of JESUS, does it not, dear children?

We are not quite sure how long Mary remained with her sweet baby at Bethlehem. We know, however, that when He was about six weeks old, she took Him into the Temple at Jerusalem, "to present Him to the LORD." When a Jewish mother brought her baby into the Temple, she was commanded to offer to God a lamb, and a young pigeon. But if she was too poor to afford a lamb, she might bring two turtle-doves, or two young pigeons. Mary was poor, so *that* was what she had to offer.

Now, there was a good old man living at Jerusalem, named Simeon. He had often read all that the prophets wrote about the coming of JESUS, and he longed, above all things to see the blessed day, when a Saviour should be born.

God had told him too, by the Spirit, that he should not die until he had seen JESUS. This good old Simeon came into the Temple, just as Joseph and Mary brought JESUS in. Then took he Him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, "LORD, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation." He meant, let me die, now that I have seen my Saviour. Joseph and Mary were astonished at all he said. Simeon blessed *them* also, and told them that this child was born to do wonderful things. There was a good old woman, too, named Anna, who came into the Temple at that moment. She too knew that this infant was the promised Saviour. So she gave God thanks, and spoke of JESUS to all who were looking for his coming. When Joseph and Mary had done all that was commanded in the law, they went back to their own city.

And now you have had a very long Chapter, I think I must not tell you anything more at present.

CHAPTER II.

JESUS A CHILD.

I AM sure, dear children, you would like to know all about JESUS when He was a child. I am sorry I have so little to tell you; but that little is quite enough to teach you what *you* ought to be. Do you think JESUS was like you, sometimes naughty, then trying to be good, and again and again doing something wrong? Oh, no; you know this could not be, for He was perfectly pure and holy; no sinful thought, no angry passion, no naughty temper, was ever seen in the blessed JESUS. But, perhaps, you think He had no temptation to sin. You say, there are so many things which make *you* naughty; you are so often tired in your little bodies, and vexed by what your brothers and sisters do. Well, dear children, JESUS was like you in all these things. He was tempted and tried in every way, as we

are. (Heb. iv. 15.) His body was often weary, like yours, and He had no comforts such as you have, for Joseph was poor, and worked as a carpenter. But in *one* thing JESUS was altogether *unlike* you. What was that? He was without sin. (Heb. iv. 15.) But, perhaps, you say, "It is so difficult to be obedient;" and as JESUS was the Lord of glory, you think He never had to obey his parents. Listen, "He went down with them, and *was subject unto them.*" (Luke ii. 51.) No wonder we read that He increased in favor with God and man.

Learn, dear children, from the example of the blessed JESUS, to "obey your parents in all things." (Colossians iii. 20.) Never let *your* will rise up against their will. When you feel disposed to try and get your own way remember JESUS, and *submit*.

When JESUS was twelve years old He went a long journey with his parents. I think you have read in the book of Exodus how God ordered the Jews to keep the feast of the Passover.

Every year, all who could go went up to Jerusalem to keep it, and JESUS went with his parents. When the feast was over, they set out to return home. All at once Mary and Joseph miss JESUS. There were many of their friends travelling on the same road, and they thought He was most likely among them. They went back and looked for Him among all the company, but found Him not. For three days they looked for Him in vain, and at last they went back to Jerusalem in great distress. And where *was* JESUS? Going into the temple his parents found Him, sitting there among the wise and learned men, hearing them and asking them questions. Everybody who heard Him, was surprised at the wonderful manner in which He talked with these clever men. His poor mother loved Him very dearly; she had suffered much while she was seeking Him, and when she saw Him, she asked Him how it was that He had dealt thus with them. JESUS seemed surprised that she should be anxious about Him. "Do you not know," said He, "that

I must be about my Father's business?" Do you think Mary understood what He meant? No, she did not; but she kept these sayings in her heart, and thought much over them. But *you* know what JESUS meant; you know that God was his Father, and that even when He was so young, He loved nothing so well as to be doing *his* work. Pray, dear children, that you may learn to be like JESUS in this, too. Do you want to know how *you* can do any work for God? I will only tell you one way now. Learn, then, while you are young to store up lessons of heavenly wisdom in your heart. Thus *you* will, by God's grace, be getting ready to work for Him when you are older. If it can be said of you, "The grace of God is upon you," as was said of JESUS, we shall be quite sure that, like Him, you will increase in wisdom, as well as in stature, and in favor with God and man.

CHAPTER III.

THE WAY PREPARED FOR JESUS.

I MUST now tell you about a child who was born about six months before Jesus. There was a priest named Zacharias; his wife's name was Elizabeth. They had no children, though they had often prayed that God would give them a son; and now they were both getting old. One day, as Zacharias was burning incense in the temple, an angel came and stood by the alter. Zacharias was much frightened when he saw him; but the angel soon spoke kind and comforting words to him. "Fear not, Zacharias, thy prayer is heard, thy wife Elizabeth shall have a son, and thou shalt call his name John." He told him, too, that this wonderful child was to make ready the way for the coming of Jesus. Zacharias could not believe what he heard. He asked the angel how he was to know that it would come

true. The angel answered, "I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God, and am sent to speak to thee." *Now*, Zacharias could not doubt any longer; but he should have believed at first. And now, because he had doubted God's word, he must be dumb, and not able to speak until the child was born. Unbelief is very displeasing to God. There were a great many people outside, waiting for Zacharias. They could not think why he was so long in coming to them. At last he came out, but he could not speak to them. This made them wonder more and more, for *they* did not know what had happened to him in the temple, as *you* now do. Some months after this Zacharias and Elizabeth had a little son born to them. His father's friends wished to have him named Zacharias; but no, his father and mother obeyed the command of God, and named him "John." Immediately Zacharias found that he could speak again; and the first thing he did was to praise God. His beautiful hymn of praise you sometimes hear at church. (Luke i. 68—

80.) One thing in it I must explain to you. Zacharias says, "And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his way." And now you will see that John had been spoken of by God in old time. Isaiah had said, "The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord." (Isa. xl. 3.) Now what did this mean? How was John to prepare the way for Jesus? I am going to tell you. When John was old enough he went to live in the wilderness. There he remained many years. All this time, you know, Jesus was living at Nazareth.

At last the time came when John was to prepare the way for Christ. The word of God came to him in the wilderness, and he began to preach, saying, "Repent ye, for the kingdom of God is at hand." But how would this make ready a way for Jesus? I will try to make you understand how. Until people learn to know that they are sinners, and really wish to turn from

sin (or *repent*), they cannot be ready to receive Jesus as a Saviour. As soon as we have learned to feel our sinfulness we shall long to fly to Him for pardon and peace. This is why John preached, "Repent." A great many people went out into the wilderness to hear him. He wore a very strange dress. "His raiment was of camel's hair, and he had a leathern girdle about his loins." His food, too, was strange. "He did eat locusts and wild honey." I think he meant to show that the followers of Jesus must not care too much about what they were to eat, and drink, and put on.

Many of the people who went to hear John preach were Pharisees, who thought themselves much better than others. Some were Sadducees, who cared very little about religion. He spoke to them all, like a good and faithful minister, and told them all alike that they never could escape the wrath of God unless they would turn from all sin and lead a new life. Many were baptized by Him in the river Jordan. Jesus,

too, came to be baptized. Do you ask, "Did Jesus need to be baptized?" So asked John. He felt *he* needed rather to be baptized by Jesus; but the holy Saviour, though He needed it not, yet for our sakes would fulfil all righteousness. Thus He set us an example that we should follow his steps. As Jesus was coming up out of the water, a wonderful sight was seen. The heavens were opened, and the Spirit of God, in the shape of a dove, was seen to descend upon Him. At the same time God the Father spoke, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." (Matt. iii. 17.) You see here, dear children, that, though there is but one God, there are three persons in the Godhead—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. God the Father spoke from heaven to God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost descended upon Him like a dove.

Very soon after this John was cast into prison, so you will not hear any more of him at present.

CHAPTER IV.

JESUS TEMPTED.

I TOLD you, dear children, that Jesus was tempted, as we are, to sin. Will you not like to know what He did when the great tempter came to Him? Jesus had been forty days in the wilderness without eating anything, so He was very hungry. The devil knew this. He thought it was a good time to try and induce the Saviour to sin. And you must learn from this to be very watchful, for Satan often chooses a time when you are tired, or not very well, to tempt you to be fretful and naughty. Three times he tried to make Jesus do what would have been wrong, and three times Jesus refused. You must not fancy when you have got rid of one temptation that you may leave off being watchful, for you may be quite sure if Satan cannot succeed in one way he will try you in another. But *how* did

Jesus conquer him? I will tell you. He carried a very sharp sword about with Him. Ah! dear children, and so must you, if you wish to conquer too. I am sure you are longing to know what sort of sword I mean. It is *the word of God*, which is “quick and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword.” (Heb. iv. 12.) Every time Satan tempted Him Jesus answered by a text from God’s Word. Satan could not withstand this sword. He left the Saviour, and angels came and ministered to Him. Try, dear children, to store up God’s Word in your memory, to hide it in your heart, that you may always be ready to fight with Satan. I will teach you a little text, to show you what good King David did. He says, “Thy Word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee.” (Ps. cxix. 11.) If you are tempted to do something wrong because you are alone, say, “Thou, God, seest me.” (Gen. xvi. 13.) If Satan tempts you to tell a lie to cover a fault, say, “I hate and abhor lying.” (Ps. cxix. 163.) If some

temptation comes which you do not know how to answer, say, "Get thee behind me, Satan" (Matt. xvi. 23), and you will soon find he is gone. Yes, and when he has left you, God will send sweet and holy thoughts into your heart, just as angels came to wait on the blessed Jesus. But remember, dear children, you can never use this sword unless God gives you grace and strength. Pray, then, much to Him. "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." (James iv. 7.)

CHAPTER V.

JESUS GOING ABOUT DOING GOOD.

AND now Jesus began to preach. I hope you will soon learn by heart the beautiful sermon called the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus sat on a mountain, and a great number of people sat down below while He taught them. He went about, too, healing all manner of sickness, so that an immense number of sick people followed Him ; and all who came were made quite well.

One day when Jesus was walking by the Sea of Galilee, He saw two men in a ship. They were brothers, and were named Simon Peter and Andrew. Just as Jesus passed by, they were casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen. He called them, saying, “Follow me.” They did not ask, “How can we? What shall we do if we leave our boat?” No; they left nets, ship, and all, and followed Jesus.

They were allowed to go back to their ships when it was necessary for them to catch more fish to live upon. But Jesus had something else for them to do, and they were willing to give up all for Him.

A little further on were two more men—James and John, the sons of Zebedee. They were in a ship with their father, mending their nets. Jesus called them too, and they followed Him. From that time they were always with Him.

Besides these four, there were eight others, whom Jesus called at different times. All twelve were called his *disciples*, because they were taught by Jesus. Sometimes you will hear them called *apostles*. That was when Jesus sent them out to preach.

And now, dear children, I am going to tell you of some of the wonderful things which Jesus did, and which are called miracles. A miracle is something which does not commonly happen, but by the extraordinary power of God. One day Jesus was invited to a wedding, with his dis-

ciples. His mother, too, was there. I suppose there were more visitors than were expected, for there was not wine enough for all. Mary came and told Jesus this. She meant to ask Him to work a miracle, and she had no doubt He would, though He did not say so. She then told the servants to do whatever Jesus should bid them. Now, there were set there six large stone water-pots, which were used to contain water. The Jews were very particular about their washings, and these jars were made to contain an immense quantity—about twenty gallons each. They were now empty. Jesus said to the servants, “Fill the water-pots with water,” and they filled them to the brim. And now Jesus told them to draw out, and carry the wine to the governor of the feast. How surprised the servants must have been to find that they were drawing out *wine*, for they knew they had only put *water* into the jars. The ruler of the feast did not know where this wine came from, but, when he had tasted it, he called the bridegroom, and asked him how it

was that he had given his friends the best wine last. This was the first miracle that Jesus performed in Cana.

You will remember that I told you of a journey which Jesus took when He was twelve years old, and went with his parents to keep the Passover at Jerusalem. I shall have to tell you of other visits which He made there for the same purpose. The first time that we hear of his going into the Temple, after he began to teach and preach, He found people there selling oxen, and sheep, and doves. There were also men sitting there with tables before them changing money. Do you not think the holy Jesus must have been much shocked at such wickedness? Indeed He was. He made a scourge of small cords, and drove them all out of the Temple, with their oxen, and sheep, and doves. Then he overthrew the tables, and poured out the money. Jesus could not bear to see his Father's house made use of for any common purpose.

And you, dear children, must learn from this

to have great reverence for God's house. Never forget, when you are there, that you are in the immediate presence of God, and never suffer yourselves to give way to idle or careless conduct in that sacred place.

While Jesus was at Jerusalem, He did many miracles of which we are not told. A great many people believed, when they saw these miracles. There was one learned man, a Pharisee, and a ruler, named Nicodemus, who longed to know more of what Jesus taught. But he could not make up his mind to be laughed at, or persecuted, so how do you think he managed to get to Jesus? He went to Him in the night. How kind it was of Jesus to receive him at such a time! It makes me think of some sweet words which were spoken of Him by Isaiah the prophet, "A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench." (Isaiah xlii. 3.) And now you can fancy Jesus talking with Nicodemus by night. You will wonder when I tell you that he could not understand the very first thing Jesus said to

him. “Why?” you will ask me; “did you not say he was a very learned man?” Ah! but, dear children, he had never been taught by God’s Holy Spirit. He did not know that we are all born in sin, and children of wrath; so when Jesus told him that none can get to heaven unless they are *born again*, Nicodemus was quite puzzled.

Have you dear children, learned to *feel*, as well as to *know*, that you must be born again, if ever you would see the kingdom of God? If not, Oh! pray earnestly that God would *make* you feel it by his Spirit. We may believe that Nicodemus became a follower of Jesus, for we read that he was not afraid to be seen paying respect to his body when it was taken down from the cross.

CHAPTER VI.

JESUS AT THE WELL OF SAMARIA.

AFTER a time Jesus left Judea, and returned to Galilee. See, dear children, what long journeys the Saviour took on foot. In that country the weather is often very hot, so hot that it is often impossible for travellers to go on in the middle of the day. Jesus had to pass through Samaria, and about twelve o'clock one day He arrived at a well called "Jacob's well." Being very tired, He sat down on the well, and while He was resting there, a woman came to draw water. Jesus was thirsty as well as tired, and He asked the woman to give Him a little water to drink.

Now, she was a woman of Samaria, and the Samaritans were not friendly with the Jews. The woman saw at once that Jesus was a Jew. She wanted to know how He could think of asking *her* for water. Ah! how little she knew who

it was that was speaking to her! If she *had* known, Jesus told her, she would have asked of Him, and He would have given her living water. This surprised her more and more. She knew the well was very deep, and she saw that Jesus had nothing to draw with, so she could not think how He could get any water at all. Jesus told her that if she had some of the water which He could give her, she would never thirst again. Often had this poor woman toiled in the heat of the sun, to draw water from that well. Oh! how glad she was to think that if Jesus would give her some of the water He spoke of, she should never have to toil there again. She did not know what He meant by living water; but *you* do, I hope, dear children. He meant that precious gift of the Holy Spirit, which He was willing to give to all who asked Him. (John vii. 35.) But Jesus did not yet explain this to her. He first showed her that He knew all her history, and that she was leading a wicked life. We may hope the poor woman would learn to love Him; but this

we are not told. We only know that Jesus made Himself known to her as the promised Messiah, and that she left her water-pot and went to call the men of her city, to hear the wonderful things He had to say. A great many of them believed on Jesus, and I hope the woman was one of the number; but He only stayed two days among them, for you remember He was on his way to Galilee. If you look at the map of Canaan, it will make these journeys of our blessed Lord much more interesting to you.

CHAPTER VII.

JESUS WORKING MIRACLES.

JESUS now came back to Cana, where He had made the water into wine. A rich nobleman who lived at Capernaum, a town some distance off, had a son very ill. No one thought he could live long. The father had heard of Jesus, and of the wonderful things He had done. In great haste he went to Jesus, and begged Him most earnestly to go with him and heal his son. He was afraid he would die before Jesus could get to him. Now, see how Jesus tried his faith. Instead of going with him, He said, "Go thy way, thy son liveth." The nobleman believed the word of Jesus, and set off home. Do you not think he must have felt the journey very long, till he could see how his dear son was? Presently he saw some of his servants coming to meet him. This would make him very anxious, for they

might be coming to tell him that his child was dead. With what joy he heard them say, "Thy son liveth." "When did he begin to mend?" the father asked. "About one o'clock yesterday," the servants answered. Then the father knew that it was at the very same hour when Jesus had said, "Thy son liveth."

I am sure you will not be surprised to hear that not only the nobleman, but all his family, believed in Jesus. But you *will* wonder when I tell you, that the people of Nazareth would not receive his words. One Sabbath-day when Jesus spoke to them in the synagogue (that was the Jewish place of worship), they were so angry with Him that they rose up, turned Him out of their city, and led Him to the edge of the hill on which Nazareth was built. They meant to throw Him down from the top, and kill Him; but Jesus passed through the very midst of them and escaped. After this He lived at Capernaum, and there a great many miracles were done. Once, when Jesus was standing near the Lake of Gen-

nesaret, the people pressed very much upon Him to hear his words. Two ships were standing by the lake; the fishermen were gone out of them, and were washing their nets. Jesus got into one of the ships, which was Simon's. He begged Simon to push out a little way from the land. Then He sat down in the ship, and taught the people as they stood on the shore. When Jesus had ended what He had to say to them, He told Peter to launch out into a deep part of the lake, and to let down his net, that he might catch some fish. Now, Peter had been toiling all night, and yet taken nothing. But when Jesus told him to let down his net he obeyed. And now, instead of taking nothing, the net was so full that it broke. James and John were in their ship a little way off, and Peter called to them to come and help him. They set to work very quickly to fill both the ships with fish. You may suppose what an immense number there were, for we are told the ships began to sink. Peter was so astonished that he scarcely knew what to say. He fell down at Je-

sus' feet, and said, Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!" You may be quite sure he did not really wish Jesus to leave him, for as soon as the ships were brought to land he left all and followed Him. I cannot tell you *all* the wonderful things which we read of our blessed Saviour. I will try to choose those which you can best understand. Does it not make you love Him very much to hear how kind and gracious He was to all who came to Him? Never do we hear that He sent any one away. Even a poor, miserable leper was kindly received by Him. Perhaps you do not know what a dreadful disease leprosy was. The poor creature who had it was not allowed to live with any one else; no one would go near him, nor do anything for him. Ah! dear children, shall I tell you what this horrible disease reminds us of? *Sin* is the leprosy of the soul; it brings with it nothing but wretchedness here, and everlasting misery hereafter. This poor leper seems to have learned to know something about Jesus, for he came and worship-

ped Him. He had faith, too, for he said, "Lord, *if thou wilt*, thou canst make me clean." He knew Jesus *could*; he did not know whether He *would* heal him. Jesus put forth his hand, touched him, and said, "*I will*, be thou clean." In a moment he felt that his leprosy was cleansed.

Dear children, can you cure yourselves of the leprosy of sin? Can your parents, or friends, or your minister, cure you? Oh, no, for it cleaves to *them*, too, by nature. Nothing but the blood of Jesus can cure it. Go to Him, and say, "Lord I know thou *canst* make me clean, and I know thou art willing too. Oh! heal my sinful soul! 'Create in me a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within me.'"

I must now tell you of a poor man who could not walk to Jesus to be healed. He could not get up from his bed, for he had no strength in his limbs. How do you think he would manage to get near to the Saviour? You shall hear.

Jesus was in the house at Capernaum, and, as every one now knew what wonderful things He

had done, a great number of people got together round Him, so that they filled up all the doorways. This poor man was determined to get near Him, so he persuaded four men to carry him up in his bed, upon the roof of the house. The roofs of the houses are not sloping in those countries, as they are in ours. They are made flat, so that people can walk, and even sleep on them in hot weather. Now see how these men persevered in getting the poor cripple near to Jesus. They uncovered the roof, made a hole in it, tied some long cords round the bed, and let it down into the midst of the room where He was. Jesus not only cured the poor man's body, He told him his sins were forgiven. Immediately strength came into his limbs, he got up from off his bed, rolled it up, and carried it out before all the people. You will understand how it was that he could carry away his bed so easily, if I tell you that it is only a kind of light mattress which is used in that country for a bed.

Dear children, learn a lesson from this poor

man! See how *earnest* he was in trying to get near to Jesus. *You* must be earnest too, if you would have your sins forgiven and your soul saved.

CHAPTER VIII.

JESUS AT THE POOL OF BETHESDA.

SOON after this, Jesus went again to Jerusalem, to the feast of the Passover. While He was there, He walked one Sabbath-day by a very large piece of water, called the Pool of Bethesda. Round this pool were five porches, or little houses. Sick people used to bathe in the water, and most likely those porches had been built for them to rest, or wait in. At a certain time, an angel used to go down and trouble the water. The first person who dipped in the water after this was made quite well. When Jesus passed by, a great many sick people were waiting there,—some blind, some lame. Among them was one poor man who had been ill for thirty-eight years. He was quite helpless, and could not move himself. Oh, how the kind Saviour pitied him! He stopped and asked him, “Wilt thou be made whole?” “Oh, Sir,”

he answered, "indeed I would ; but I have no hope of ever being cured. I have no one to help me, and when I am trying to get to the water, some one else steps in before me." Do you think Jesus would leave him in this sad condition ? Oh, no ! He said unto him, "Rise, take up thy bed, and walk." As soon as the words were spoken the impotent man found that he could walk with ease, and carry his bed. The Jews were very angry when they saw him carrying his bed on the Sabbath. The poor man answered them, "He that made me whole, the same said unto me, 'Take up thy bed.'" He felt sure he could not do wrong in obeying one who had power to heal him. You will see more about keeping the Sabbath by another little history.

Jesus and his disciples had occasion one Sabbath to pass through a corn-field. The disciples were hungry, and plucked some ears of corn to eat. This was not wrong in itself (Deuteronomy xxiii. 25), but the Pharisees were much displeased at their doing it on that day. Jesus told

them that He was Lord of the Sabbath. He explained to them that works of mercy or necessary works might be done on that day. The very same day He went into their synagogue. A man was there who had a withered hand. Jesus said unto him, "Stretch forth thy hand," and immediately his hand was cured. You may suppose this would make the Jews more and more angry. They were watching Him to see what He would do. Now, though they did not speak aloud, Jesus knew what was passing in their hearts. He asked them what *they* would do if an ass or an ox of theirs fell into a pit on the Sabbath. They would not think of leaving it there to die. Why, then, should not a poor fellow-creature be relieved from pain on the Sabbath-day? The Jews never forgave Jesus for what they called breaking the Sabbath. They persecuted Him, and often tried to kill Him. You must not suppose, dear children, that Jesus meant to allow of our doing our own ways or taking our own pleasure on God's day. *That* must not be done; but we may per-

form acts of kindness and mercy, and we may do things which are needful for the body, if these could not have been done the day before. All who love the "Lord of the Sabbath," the Lord Jesus Christ, will try to manage so that the day may be quite given up to his service, and it will help to remind them of that sweet and eternal Sabbath which they hope to spend in heaven with Him.

You have heard how Jesus cured all manner of sickness, and now I must tell you something more wonderful still. Jesus was one day walking to a city called Nain. Just as He came to the gate of the city, He met the body of a dead man, which was being carried to the grave. The poor mother was walking behind, weeping bitterly. She had lost her husband, and now her only earthly comfort was taken from her. Her neighbors felt so much for her that many of them came with her. Do you think Jesus could see this sad sight without speaking a kind word to the poor mother? Oh! no. He had compas-

sion on her, and said, "Weep not." But that was not all. He went near, and touched the bier, and they that carried it stood still. Then said Jesus, "Young man, I say unto thee, arise." What do you think the poor mother must have felt when she saw her dear son sit up and begin to speak? Her heart must have leaped for joy. The people who saw it felt a great fear come over them. They said that God had visited his people; and so indeed He had, for Jesus was "very God" a well as man.

CHAPTER IX.

JESUS SHOWING MERCY.

AND now, dear children, I have a very sweet story to tell you of our dear Saviour. You will see that He was not only kind and gracious to those who were sick in body, but to those who felt themselves to be sinners, and grieved on account of sin. I told you that the Pharisees thought themselves very good—better than all other people. A Pharisee, named Simon, asked Jesus to dine with him. A poor woman, who had once been a great sinner, heard that Jesus was there. She felt her sinfulness, and longed to be forgiven. She knew that Jesus could forgive her, and this made her heart so full of love to Him that she tried to think how she could *show* her love. She had a beautiful box of alabaster. This is a very fine white marble, very costly. This box she filled with ointment, and

took it with her into the room where Jesus sat at meat. It seems very strange to you that she should have been admitted into the room. The customs of people in Eastern countries are very different from ours. It is common, even now, for strangers to go into the room where persons are dining, and to sit down on seats near the wall. No one takes any notice of them. People did not then *sit* as we do at meals, but lay on couches, with their elbow resting on the table, and their feet turned outwards. This poor woman came *behind* Jesus. And what did she do there? She stood weeping, washing the Saviour's feet with her tears, wiping them with the hair of her head, kissing them, and anointing them with the ointment. Jesus knew what she was doing, but He did not for some time appear to take any notice of her. Simon, too, saw her, and wicked pride rose up in his heart. He said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would have known that this woman is a sinner." Simon only said this *to himself*; and yet, mark, Jesus knew

what was passing in his heart. He showed Simon how wrong he was by a sort of little story. There were two men, who both owed some money to the same person. One owed him five hundred pence, the other owed him only fifty. Neither of them had anything to pay, and the kind man to whom they owed the money freely forgave them both. Jesus asked Simon which of the two would love him most. Simon answered, "I suppose that he, to whom he forgave most." Jesus then explained to him that the reason this poor woman showed him so much love was, that she felt she had so many sins to be forgiven. Can you not imagine her joy when Jesus turned to her and said, "Thy sins are forgiven"? I think she would scarcely hear the murmuring of the proud people who sat at meat with Jesus; she could only listen to the sweet words which He spoke when He said, "Thy faith hath saved thee: go in peace."

Dear children, *do you* love Jesus? I hope you do, for I am sure you have many sins to be for-

given. If you do not love Him, it is only because you do not yet feel this. Pray to God that He will show you how much Jesus has done for you, and that He will make you love *Him* who has so loved you.

CHAPTER X.

JESUS TEACHING BY PARABLES.

You remember in the last chapter I told you that Jesus explained what he meant by a kind of story. Now this was a way of teaching which Jesus often used. He taught in *Parables*. I am going to tell you some of these parables, and as we go on I think you will be able to find out what they mean by yourselves. I shall begin with the one called the Parable of the Sower. Jesus was teaching by the sea-side, and so many people gathered round him that He entered into a ship and taught them. When they were all ready to listen, Jesus said to them, "Hearken! —a sower went out to sow." Now the *seed* was all alike, but it did not all fall on the same kind of ground. Some fell on a pathway. This was soon picked up by the birds. Some fell on stony ground, and this sprang up;

but there was not depth enough of earth, so it soon withered away. Some seed fell among thorns; this was soon choked. Last of all, some fell on ground which had been manured, and ploughed, and harrowed, and watered, and made quite ready for the seed. This sprang up, and bore fruit, not all alike, but some more and some less. The disciples could not understand this parable. Jesus graciously explained what it meant. The seed, He told them, is the Word of God. Every one who hears God's Word read or preached has the seed sown in his heart. So then, dear children, the ground is the heart,—*your* heart when you hear God's Word, either at home or at church. As you get older, you will understand by degrees what is meant by the wayside ground, the stony ground, and the thorny ground. But you are old enough now to understand that the reason why so many people get no good by reading and hearing God's Word is, that their hearts are not made ready to receive it.

How must they be made ready? We must pray God to break up these hard and stony hearts, to send the dew of his grace upon them—to rain down his Holy Spirit upon them. Then they will be soft and tender. Then his Word will take root in them. Then we shall bring forth fruit, that is the fruit of holiness, to the praise and glory of God.

Another parable is called the Parable of the Tares. Jesus meant to teach, that good and bad people would always be mixed together in this world. A man sowed good seed in his field. Of course he expected a good crop of corn. While men slept his enemy came, and sowed bad seed, or tares, among the wheat. No doubt, this wicked man thought he should spoil the whole crop. The servants who worked in the field soon noticed the tares springing up. They went to their master, and asked if they should not weed them all out? "No," said the master, "I fear lest, while you are pulling up the tares, you should

root up some wheat with them ; let both grow together until the harvest. When that time comes, I will say to the reapers, ‘Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn.’ ”

Ah, dear children, I am sure you understand this. Many who live among God’s people now, go to church with them, and appear very like them, are not *really* God’s people. Their hearts have not been changed by his grace, and they are not striving to live to his glory. *We* cannot always tell which are his true people, but do you not think *God* can ? Oh, yes ! We read, “Be not deceived ; God is not mocked.” (Gal. vi. 7.) At the great day He will tell his angels to separate the righteous from the wicked for ever ! Those who have not really given themselves to Him here, must then be cast away from Him for ever. But not one of his own people shall be overlooked. Every one of them shall be safely gathered into the heavenly barn, “ and they

shall be mine, saith the Lord, in that day when I make up my jewels." (Malachi iii. 17.)

Now listen to two short parables, both of which have the same meaning. Jesus said, "The kingdom of God is like a grain of mustard seed, which a man took and cast into his garden, and it grew, and became a large tree, so that the birds of the air lodged in it." Again, "The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened."

Now, dear children, this little grain of mustard seed and this leaven are like the first beginnings of God's grace in your hearts. If it has been really sown there, it will be sure to grow, just as the mustard seed grew to be a great tree; and the little leaven leavened the whole of the meal. If God's Spirit has begun to work in your hearts, it will work more and more (that is, if you go on seeking it,) until it is seen in everything you do and say. Then you will long that *others* should be blessed too, and as you grow

older, you will be always thinking what you can do, to lead them to seek the same Spirit.

There is only one more parable I wish to explain to you now. It is about a fig tree which a man planted in his vineyard. For three years he went and looked for fruit, but the fig tree bore none. At last he said to the dresser of his vineyard, "Cut down that fig tree, that it may make room for some other tree, which *will* bear fruit." The dresser was grieved to think of cutting down the tree. "Lord," said he, "let it alone yet one year longer." He said, he would take more pains with it, and perhaps it would yet bear fruit. "If not, after that thou shalt cut it down."

Ah ! dear children, *we* are like this fig tree. God has planted us in his vineyard. He has caused us to be born in a Christian country. He has given us his Word, his day, his sacraments, his ministers, his Gospel. He has entreated us all to look to the Lord Jesus Christ and be saved. He has promised to give us his Holy Spirit, if

we will only ask for it. And what does He expect from us? He expects us to make a good use of all these blessings. He comes and looks for *fruit*. Now, many of us do not bring forth any fruit. God has great patience—He often waits year after year, to see if we will give ourselves up to Him; but if we will not, the time must come when He will say, “Cut it down.” Why is it, do you think, that God has not cut down some of us long ago? Who do you think is the good and kind vine-dresser? Oh, it is the Lord Jesus Christ! He intercedes with the Lord of the Vineyard for us. He begs that we may be left a little longer, that we may yet turn to God.

Dear children! think what a pleasant vineyard *you* have been planted in! You may well say,—

“I thank the goodness and the grace
Which on my birth have smiled,
And made me in these Christian days
A happy English child.

But, oh ! do not put off seeking after God. Seek Him while you are young. Give Him your heart (Prov. xxiii. 26), and beg Him, *even now*, to make you bring forth fruit to his glory.

CHAPTER XI.

JESUS WORKING MORE MIRACLES.

I THINK you will now be glad to hear some more of our Lord's wonderful works. I told you that He often taught in a ship on the sea, while the people stood on the shore. This sea was the Sea of Galilee, or Lake of Tiberias. You had better find it on your map. One evening, when Jesus had finished teaching, he asked his disciples to cross over to the other side of the lake. As they were sailing a great storm of wind arose, and the waves beat so violently into the ship that it was full of water. But where was Jesus? He was asleep on a pillow. Do you think He did not know what a storm they were in? Could He not have prevented it? Oh, yes! But He wished to try the faith of his disciples. It seems very wonderful that they should have been so frightened when Jesus was with them. They awoke Him crying,

“Lord, save us; we perish!” Immediately He arose, rebuked the wind, and said unto the raging sea, “Peace, be still.” In a moment the wind ceased, the sea became smooth. There was a great calm. They were more surprised by this miracle than by any they had seen before. They said, “What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?” (Mark iv. 41.)

When Jesus landed after this storm, there met Him two wretched men, possessed with devils. In those days the devil was sometimes permitted to enter into people. When he did so, the poor creatures were in a most wretched state. These two men were so fierce that no one dared to pass that way. When they saw Jesus they cried out, for they knew Him. Jesus commanded the devils to come out of them. Then the poor men became quiet and peaceable. St. Luke only tells us of *one man*, and he says the people came and found him sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in his right mind. The devils were obliged to obey Jesus. They asked Him to allow them

to enter into a large herd of swine, which were feeding there. Jesus told them they might, and immediately the whole herd ran violently down a steep place into the sea, and were drowned. The Jews had no right to keep swine at all, for they were "unclean" beasts. Those who had the care of them went in great haste into the city, and told everything that had happened. Then all the people came out to meet Jesus, and begged Him to depart out of their coasts. Jesus, therefore, crossed the lake again, and went back to Capernaum. As He was walking near the town, He saw a man named Matthew, sitting at the receipt of custom. He was a tax-gatherer, or publican; that is, he collected the money which the Jews of that place had to pay to the Roman Government. He was busy taking the money, when Jesus passed by. Jesus said to him, "Follow me," and immediately he left all and followed Him. Now Matthew wanted to show his love to the Saviour, who had thus mercifully called him. How do you think he showed it? He

made a great feast for Him (Luke v. 29), and invited—*whom* do you think? Why, he invited a great number of publicans and sinners to meet Jesus. I have no doubt he hoped some of them would be inclined, like him, to follow the Saviour. He longed that some of his old friends and companions should hear the gracious words of Jesus. The proud Pharisees were quite shocked to see these publicans and sinners eating with Jesus and his disciples. Hear the blessed words which the Saviour spoke in answer to them, “They that are whole (or well) need not a physician, but they that are sick; I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.” So you see Jesus tells us that He is the physician of our souls. If we do but feel our sickness, and go to Him with it, He is both able and willing to cure us.

While Jesus was talking, a ruler named Jairus came to Him in great trouble. He had only one little daughter, twelve years old, and she was dying. Jairus believed that Jesus could heal her, so he begged that He would go to his house with

him. Jesus set out at once with his disciples. As they were going, the people pressed and thronged around them. In the crowd was a poor woman, who had been ill twelve years. She had been to many doctors, who had put her to great pain, in trying to cure her ; but, instead of being any better, she rather grew worse. She had spent all her money, too, so that she could no longer afford to buy any medicine. In her trouble this poor woman heard of Jesus. She believed that He could cure her. In the crowd she managed to get behind Him, without being noticed, and to touch the hem of his garment. In a moment she felt that she was quite well ! And do you think no one saw her ? Ah ! the Saviour knew all about her. He knew all she had suffered all those years ; He knew how she had come behind Him in fear, *yet believing*. No thought of our hearts is hidden from his all-seeing eye. Turning round, Jesus said, “ Who touched me ? ” Peter and the disciples were quite astonished that He should ask this, when so many were pressing on Him.

But though many pressed on Him, only one touched Him *in faith*; that is, expecting to receive something from Him. The poor woman was sadly frightened when she found that she was not hid from the Saviour's notice. She came trembling, and told Him for what cause she had touched Him, and how she was made whole directly. And now hear how sweetly He spoke to her: "Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace."

You remember, I dare say, that this happened when Jesus was on his way to the house of Jairus. While He was speaking to the woman, a servant came to tell Jairus that his daughter was dead. Jesus heard what was said, but He still went on. When He got to the house, He saw people there with instruments of music, making a great noise. This was a custom in that country when one of a family died. When Jesus saw the little girl's mother and friends weeping and lamenting, He told them not to weep, for she was not dead, but only asleep. Then He put them all out of the

room, and allowed no one to go in with Him but Peter, James, and John, and the father and mother. Then, going up to the bed on which the dead body was laid, He took it by the hand, and called, saying, "Maid, arise." At his word her spirit came to her again, and she arose from the bed. Very great must have been the joy of her father and mother when they saw her alive and well.

This is the second time we have heard of Jesus raising the dead to life. I shall have one more miracle of the same kind to tell you of, but not yet.

CHAPTER XII.

JESUS SENDING OUT THE APOSTLES TO PREACH.

I TOLD you before that Jesus had chosen twelve disciples to be with Him. *Now*, He sent them out to preach the Gospel. He gave them power to heal all manner of sickness, and to cast out devils. They were only to preach to the Jews. Do you quite understand why I say “only to the Jews”? The Jews are the chosen people of God. Abraham was their father; that is, they are all descended from Abraham. All the other people in the world are called Gentiles. You must try and remember this, for I shall have to tell you some parables in which both Jews and Gentiles are spoken of. At the time we are talking of, the Gospel was only to be preached to the Jews. The apostles were to take no money in their purses, no food, and no clothes but those which they wore. When they entered a city,

they were to ask for the worthy (that is, *good*) people in it, and they were to remain with those people all the time they stayed in the place. But suppose they went into a house or a city where the people would not hear them nor receive their message, what were they to do? Why, they were to shake off the dust of their feet when they left that house or that city.

This shows us, dear children, how angry it makes God when any do not receive his ministers or listen to their word. You remember, I am sure, how Sodom and Gomorrha were destroyed by fire and brimstone. Well, but Jesus says that in the day of judgment it will be better even for those wicked cities than for people who despise his ministers and their message.

I hope you have not forgotten that John the Baptist had been cast into prison. I do not think I told you *who* put him there, or *why*. It was wicked King Herod who had laid hold on him, and bound him. And why? John had told him plainly of his evil doings, and this made Her-

od so angry that he would have killed him at once, if he had dared. At last, one day when Herod on his birthday made a great feast, a wicked young woman, and her wicked mother, whom Herod had married, were there. Herod was so delighted with the young woman's dancing that he swore he would give her anything she liked to ask. She went to consult with her wicked mother, who hated the righteous John. She said, "Ask for the head of John the Baptist."

Can you think of anything more dreadful than that a woman should ask such a thing? Ah! dear children, this shows us how hard sin makes the heart. These wicked women had no feeling left; and no one can tell, when he begins to give way to sin, where it will end. Herod sent to the prison, and had John's head cut off. It was brought in a charger to the damsel, and she gave it to her mother. John's disciples came and took up the body, and buried it.

Do you think Herod was happy, now he had got rid of John? Oh! no. "There is no peace,

saith my God, to the wicked." (Isa. lvii. 21.) The wonderful works of Jesus began to be talked about, and Herod became frightened. He thought it must be John the Baptist who was risen from the dead. He was very anxious to see Him, that he might know whether it was so ; but he never did see Jesus till just before He was crucified.

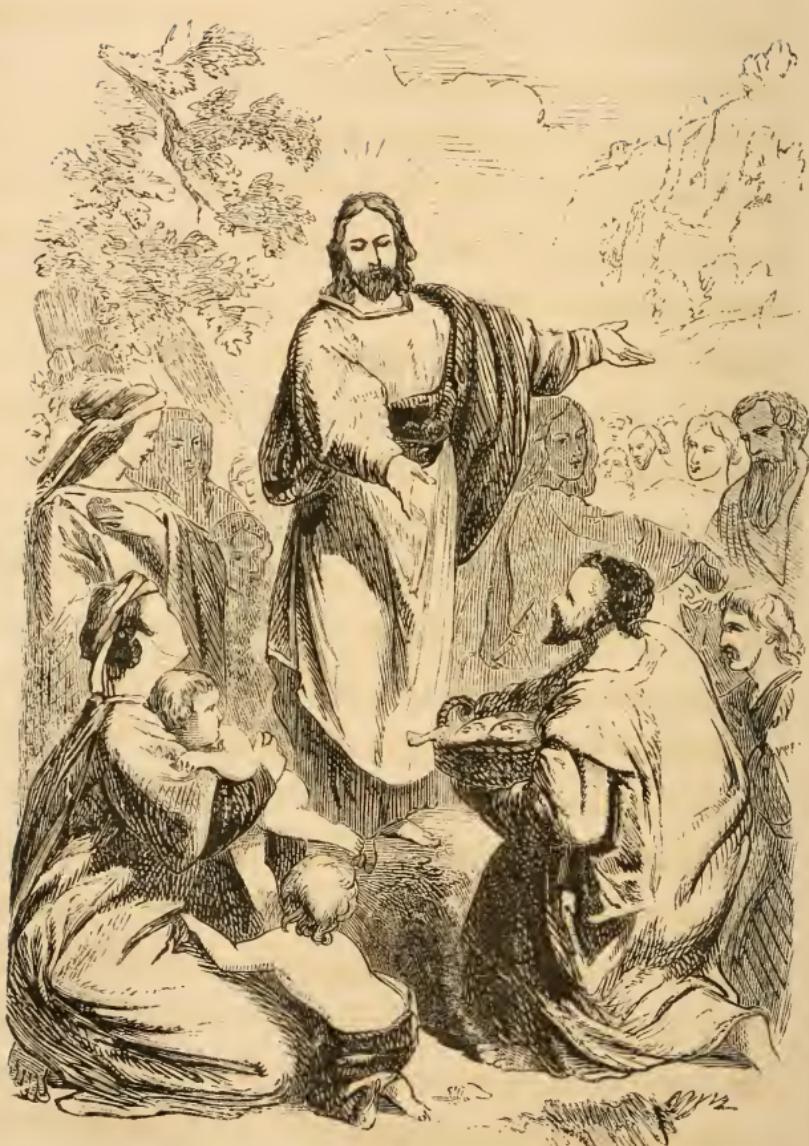
When Jesus heard of John's death, He went into a desert place alone. There the apostles came to Him, to tell Him of all they had done while they were away.

CHAPTER XIII.

JESUS FEEDS THE FIVE THOUSAND.

I TOLD you that Jesus went into a desert place when He heard of John's death. He was not allowed to rest long. People from all the towns around followed Him, bringing with them many sick to be cured. As many as five thousand men, besides women and children, were gathered together. They staid all day listening to Jesus; but they had brought nothing to eat. At last evening came on, the people were hungry, and they were a long, long way from their homes. The disciples begged that Jesus would send them away into the towns and villages, that they might buy bread. "No," said Jesus, "they need not depart; give ye them to eat." The disciples asked Him how they could possibly find food for that great multitude. Must they go and buy two hundred pennyworth of bread for them? Jesus





said, "How many loaves have ye? go, and see." They found they had five loaves and two fishes; but what was that among so many? Then Jesus made all the people sit down by fifties on the grass, and when He had taken the loaves, He looked up to heaven, and blessed them. Let us learn, from our dear Saviour's example, never to forget to ask a blessing from our Father in heaven on our food! He then broke up the loaves, and divided the fishes, and desired the disciples to give some of each to all the people. Not only did all eat, but all were filled; yes, and much, too, was left on the grass. Do you think this would be wasted? Oh, no! In this too let us learn a lesson from Jesus. He desired that all should be gathered up, that nothing might be lost. People sometimes seem to think that where there is *plenty*, a little waste does not signify; but you see, Jesus did not think so. Always remember, dear children, that *waste is sin*.

As soon as the people were satisfied, Jesus told

the disciples to get into a ship, and go before Him to the other side of the Lake. He remained behind to send away the multitude, and then went up into a mountain apart to pray. When the disciples had sailed partly across the lake, they could get no further. The ship lay there tossed with waves, and the wind was against them. No doubt they wished, again and again, that they had not set off without Jesus. "If He were here," they would say, "He would calm this raging sea." But though Jesus was not with them, He knew their distress. In the middle of the night He went to meet them. But you will ask me, how He could get to them on the sea, for He had no boat? Jesus walked on the raging sea, and as easily as if it had been dry land. When the disciples saw Him in the darkness, they were much frightened, and cried out for fear. But Jesus soon spoke kind words to them, "Be of good cheer; it is I, be not afraid." Oh, how rejoiced must they have been to hear the voice of their dear Lord! Peter begged that

Jesus would allow *him* to walk on the water. Jesus said, "Come." For a moment, Peter was able to stand on the water; but when he saw the tossing waves his faith failed him, and he began to sink. Immediately he cried out, "Lord, save me," and Jesus caught him by the arm, saying to Him, "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" As soon as Jesus had entered the ship, the wind ceased. All who were in the ship worshipped Him, saying, "Of a truth thou art the Son of God."

Some time after this, Jesus went into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon. You must find these places on your map. That part of the country belonged to Gentiles. No doubt the Saviour went there, on purpose to show mercy to one poor Gentile woman, who was in trouble. She must have heard of Jesus, and believed Him to be really the Saviour, for she came kneeling to Him, and called Him "Lord." Her cry was for her poor daughter. Satan had entered into her, and she earnestly entreated Jesus to come and cast

him out. But Jesus seemed as if He did not even hear her. "Send her away," said the disciples, "for she crieth after us." Jesus answered, "I am not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Now, if this poor woman had not been very earnest, she would have gone away, thinking it was of no use for her to go on praying. But did she do this? Oh, no! She became more earnest still. She came and worshipped Jesus saying, "Lord, help me." Jesus spoke again —He said, "It is not meet (or right) to take the children's bread and to cast it to dogs." By dogs, He meant the Gentiles. Now hear how meekly and humbly this poor woman replied, "Yes, Lord, but even the dogs eat of the crumbs that fall from their master's table." And now Jesus would try her faith no longer. "Oh! woman," said He, "great is thy faith; be it unto thee even as thou wilt." And her daughter was made quite well directly.

We may all learn from this poor woman's example what it is to be really in earnest in prayer.

She how she went on and on, in spite of all difficulties ;—and so *we* must pray again and again for those blessings which we really desire. Sometimes God seems as if He did not hear us ; but this is only to try us, whether we are really anxious for the things we ask. If we persevere, He will certainly hear us, and bless us. By-and-by I shall have to tell you a parable by which Jesus teaches this. We do not hear of anything else which He did in that country.

CHAPTER XIV.

JESUS TRANFIGURED.

EVEN the disciples did not always understand Jesus. They had yet a great deal to learn, and Jesus was very kind and tender to them. Once when He was walking with them, He began to tell them how many things He had to suffer ; that He should be killed, and would rise again the third day. They could not bear to hear of his suffering. Peter even began to rebuke Him, saying, “ Be it far from thee, Lord.” Jesus treated this as if it had been a temptation of Satan. He turned round and said unto Peter, “ Get thee behind me, Satan : thou art an offence unto me.”

Jesus often chose three of his disciples to be with Him, when He could not have them all with Him. These three were Peter, James, and John. About six days after what I have just told you, He took them up into a high mountain.

There Jesus prayed, and while He prayed they saw a wonderful change pass upon Him. His face shone like the sun, and his raiment was white and bright as the light. Two men were seen talking with Him about his death. These two men were Moses and Elias, who appeared in their glorified bodies. The three disciples were so astonished and affrighted at this wonderful sight that they knew not what to say. At last Peter cried out, "Lord, it is good for us to be here. Let us build three tents, one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias." While he was speaking, a cloud covered them, and they were all filled with fear as they entered the cloud. Soon a voice was heard out of the cloud, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." The disciples fell on their faces when they heard this voice. At last Jesus came and touched them, saying to them in his own kind and gentle manner, "Arise, be not afraid." And now they ventured to look up again, but no one was to be seen except their Lord. Jesus

walked down the mountain with them, and desired them to tell no man what they had seen, until He was risen from the dead. They found the other nine disciples with a great crowd of people round them, and all talking very earnestly. As soon as the people saw Jesus, they all ran to meet Him. What do you think was the matter? I will tell you. A poor man was there whose son had an evil spirit. He had brought him to the disciples, while Jesus was on the mountain, but they could not cast out the devil. *Why* do you think? Jesus had given them power to cast out devils,—why could they not do it? When they were alone with Him afterwards, they asked Him why it was. Jesus told them it was because they had not been earnest enough in prayer, and had not had faith in God. Well, the poor father told Jesus what a dreadful state his son was in; how he was sometimes cast into the fire, and sometimes into the water. He was not quite sure that Jesus could cure him, but he said, “If thou canst do anything,

have compassion on us, and help us." Jesus told him that if only he could believe, anything was possible to him. The poor father burst into tears and cried out, "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief." Jesus then spoke to the evil spirit. It came out of the child, and he was made quite well. All the people were filled with wonder; this will not surprise you, I am sure.

Soon after this, when Jesus was at Capernaum, they that collected the tribute-money came to Peter, and said, "Does your Master pay tribute?" "Yes," said Peter. Now Jesus had no money to buy it with. What do you think He would do? He sent Peter to the sea, told him to cast a hook, and take the very first fish that he caught. I dare say you think he was to sell this fish to pay the tribute. No; something more wonderful than that. Peter was to open his mouth, and Jesus told him he would find a piece of money. Peter did as Jesus commanded him : he caught a fish, opened his mouth, and found a piece of money,

which was exactly enough to pay his own tribute-money and Peter's.

You see, dear children, that, though Jesus was Lord of heaven and earth, He became so poor that He could not pay the small sum of fifteen pence without working a miracle. *Why* did He so humble himself? St. Paul tells us: "Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet *for your sakes* He became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich." (2 Cor. viii. 9.)

CHAPTER XV.

JESUS TEACHING LESSONS OF HUMILITY AND FORGIVENESS.

AND now I think you will be very much surprised at what I have to tell you about the disciples. It shows us how weak even good people are in themselves. As they were on the way to Capernaum, they were disputing together who should be the greatest. Perhaps they did not think at the time that Jesus knew anything about this strange quarrel. But when they were come into the house He asked them, “What was it that ye disputed about by the way?” They were too much ashamed to answer Him. (Mark ix. 34.) Then Jesus sat down, and took a little child and set him in the midst of them. He told them that no one could really be his disciples unless he was as humble and as willing to be taught as a little child. If any one of them wished to

be greater than the others, he was to be less than all. Jesus talked a great deal to them about being humble and forgiving. Peter asked how *often* he must forgive any one who offended him. He said, "Must I forgive him seven times?" Peter thought *that* would be very often; but Jesus told him he must be willing to forgive seventy times seven, if necessary. He then taught them, by a beautiful parable, the true secret of a forgiving spirit. A certain king had many servants. He wished to reckon with them. One of these servants owed him a great deal of money, nearly two hundred pounds of our money. The man had nothing to pay with, and his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife and children, and all that he had. When the servant heard this, he fell down at his feet, and begged for time, to try and raise the money, "Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all." His kind lord saw his distress, and was very sorry for him. He loosed him, and forgave him the whole of the debt. "Oh!" you think, "how

full of thankfulness that poor man must have been." But now, see whether it was so. A short time after he went out, and saw one of his fellow-servants, who owed him a small sum of money (about three pounds). In a rough manner he took him by the throat, saying, "Pay me that thou owest." The poor man begged, *just as he had begged* his lord, to give him time, and he would pay him all. Not one moment would he wait, but cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt. Now when the other servants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and went and told it to their lord. Do you not think it was quite just that his lord should now punish this wicked man? Oh, yes! he called him, and said unto him, "Oh thou wicked servant! I forgave thee all that debt because thou desiredst me; shouldest not thou have had compassion on thy fellow-servant, even as I had pity on thee?" Then he was given up into the hands of tormentors, until he should pay all his debt.

Learn from this parable, dear children, often

to think how much *God* has forgiven *us*, how patient He is with us, how little we deserve his mercy. This will be the way, by God's grace, to get a kind, patient, forgiving spirit. And if ever we are inclined to be angry and impatient with others, let us remember those beautiful words of St. Paul. "Be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." (Ephesians iv. 32.)

CHAPTER XVI.

JESUS AT THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES.

You have already heard of Jesus keeping one of the three great feasts which God had commanded the Jews to observe. You will be able to tell me *which*. Another was called the Feast of Tabernacles. For seven days, the people were to live in booths, or tents made of the branches of trees. This was to remind them of the forty years they lived in tents, when they were brought up out of the land of Egypt. When the time of this feast drew near, some of the relations of Jesus came and begged Him to go up with them to Jerusalem, that people there might see his wonderful works. They said this in a jeering way (for they did not believe on Him); but Jesus answered them very mildly, “ Go ye up to the feast. I go not up yet, for my time is not yet come.” You remember how angry the Jews

were with Jesus for healing on the Sabbath. He had told them, too, many things which they did not like to hear about themselves.

Wicked people always hate those who speak the truth to them. So the Jews often tried to kill Him, but He always escaped out of their hands. About the middle of the Feast, Jesus went up to Jerusalem by Himself. He went into the Temple and taught. All who heard Him were much astonished ; they could not think how it was that He had so much knowledge, for his parents were poor, and could not have had Him taught. Jesus then plainly told them that *God* was his Father, that He had been sent by God, and did the will of God. All this only made them the more angry. The Pharisees, especially, were in such a rage that they sent officers to take Him. Jesus took this opportunity of preaching to *them* also. He invited all who were athirst “to come unto Him and drink.”

You know what He meant by this, dear children, do you not ? The officers were so astonished

at his sayings that they went away without laying hands on Him. When they got back to those who sent them, they were asked, "Why have ye not brought Him?" They answered, "Never man spake like this man." You may be sure the Pharisees were much displeased, and I think you will be glad to hear that Nicodemus, who had not dared to come to Jesus by day-light before, now spoke out for Him, before the other Pharisees.

While Jesus remained at Jerusalem, He often spoke to the Jews in the Temple. They were very proud of having Abraham for their father. Jesus told them that instead of doing as Abraham did, they showed, by their wicked works, that they were the children of the Devil. "Abraham rejoiced to see my day," He said, "and he saw it, and was glad." Do you know how this could be, when Abraham lived 1,900 years before Jesus came? I will tell you. God allowed holy men of old to have the comfort of looking forward by faith to the time of the Saviour's coming. Abra-

ham was one of this number, but the Jews did not understand how he could have seen Jesus. “What,” said they, “hast thou seen Abraham? Thou art not yet fifty years old!” Jesus answered them, “Before Abraham was, *I am.*”

You know when Moses was sent to the people of Israel in Egypt, he asked God what he was to say if the people inquired *Who* sent him. God answered, “Thus shalt thou say, *I AM* hath sent me unto you.” You see Jesus now calls himself by the same name, meaning that *He* was “Jehovah,” “the beginning and the ending, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.” (Rev. i. 8.)

And now the Jews could not hold their rage any longer. Nothing was so dreadful in their eyes as that a man should make himself equal with God. They took up stones to throw at Him, but Jesus in a wonderful manner escaped from them, passing through the very midst of them, and yet hiding himself from them.

CHAPTER XVII.

JESUS QUESTIONED BY A LAWYER.

ONE day when Jesus was teaching, a lawyer stood up, and asked Him a very important question. The lawyers were very learned in the law of Moses, and explained it to the people. This lawyer asked Jesus what he must do to get to heaven.

Now, I am afraid he did not really care to know, but only wanted to hear what Jesus would say. Jesus asked him what he read in the law. "I read there," said the lawyer, "'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy mind, with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and thy neighbor as thyself.'" "Thou hast answered rightly," said Jesus; "do this, and thou shalt live."

Now, the lawyer knew that he had never loved God with all his heart, but he did not wish to

confess his sin ; so, to excuse himself, he inquired, “ Who is my neighbor ? ” Jesus answered him by a very beautiful parable. A certain man was travelling from Jerusalem to Jericho on foot. He was attacked by thieves, who stripped him of his clothes, wounded him, and left him half dead lying upon the ground. While he was lying there in this sad state, a priest came down that way, looked at him, and passed by on the other side. Soon after a Levite passed by, and he, too, turned away, without trying to help or comfort him in any way. Presently another man came past ; but he was a Samaritan. Now, you remember the Jews and Samaritans were not friendly ; but this man’s heart was full of kindness ; he could not bear to see the distress of the poor wounded man. Going up to him, he bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine ; then he set him on his own beast, and took him to the nearest inn. There he had him taken care of. The next day this kind Samaritan was obliged to go on his journey. Before he set out, he call-

ed the master of the house, and, taking out two pence, he gave them to him. "Take care of this sick man," said he, "and if you spend more for him, I will repay you when I come this way."

This was the parable. Jesus now asked the lawyer which of the three—the priest, the Levite, or the Samaritan—was neighbor to him that fell among thieves. He answered, that the one who showed mercy was his neighbor. "Then," said Jesus, "go thou, and do likewise."

Are you not very much shocked, dear children, at the conduct of the Priest, and Levite? I am sure you are. You see then how disgusting as well as sinful *selfishness* is. St. Paul teaches us a very sweet lesson when he says, "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others." (Phil. ii. 4.)

CHAPTER XVIII.

JESUS AND THE HAPPY FAMILY AT BETHANY.

I AM now going to tell you about a very happy family who lived at Bethany, a little village a short distance from Jerusalem. Why were they so happy, do you think? "Perhaps," you say, "they were very rich." No, dear children, *that* would not have made them so happy. One little verse tells us how it was. "Now, Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus;" and He often stayed at their house when He was near Jerusalem. Those *must* be happy whom Jesus loves. The first time we read anything about Martha and Mary was when Jesus was travelling, and they received Him into their house. As soon as Jesus had sat down, He began to speak to them of the things of God. Mary was eager to catch every word which fell from the Saviour's lips. She sat at his feet, and heard his word. Now,

Martha was really a good woman too, and no doubt loved Jesus ; but she did not show her love in the best way. She was so anxious to provide a good meal for her Lord that she had her mind too much taken up with making it ready. At last she became quite vexed that her sister did not help her. She came and begged that Jesus would send her to assist. Hear how Jesus answered her. “ *Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things, but (or only) one thing is needful.*”

Ah ! dear children, you know *that is* the care of the soul. It is not wrong to attend to the buisness of this life. No ; God has told us that we must not be “ slothful in business ;” but we must still be “ fervent ” or “ earnest ” “ in spirit, serving the Lord.” Jesus himself tells us not to seek what we must eat, or what we must drink, but to seek *first* the kingdom of God and his righteousness.” (Matt. vi. 33.) This was just what Mary had done ; and no doubt she had

learnt such sweet lessons from her Saviour's lips as she could never forget.

A short time after this Martha and Mary were in great trouble. Their dear brother, Lazarus, became very ill. Jesus was a long way off, beyond Jordan, but they sent directly to tell Him. I am sure you think that Jesus would go at once and heal him, and I dare say they expected it too. No; Jesus could show his almighty power more wonderfully by waiting a time. After He knew, therefore, that Lazarus was sick, He remained two days longer in the same place where He was. During this time Lazarus died. Do you not think his sisters must have wondered that Jesus had not come to them in their trouble? At last Jesus set out towards Bethany. As He was journeying, He told his disciples plainly that Lazarus was dead. When they reached Bethany, they found that he had been buried four days. Many of the Jews came from Jerusalem to comfort Martha and Mary. Some of these took the first news to the poor sisters that Jesus was coming. As

soon as Martha heard this, she ran to meet Him; but Mary sat still in the house. When Martha met the Saviour, she cried, "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother would not have died; but even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, He will give it thee." Jesus said, "Thy brother shall rise again." Martha thought Jesus meant that he should rise again at the last day. Then it was that the Saviour spoke those wonderful and blessed words which are now used in our Burial Service every time a body is committed to the grave:—"I am the resurrection, and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." (John xi. 25, 26.) Jesus asked Martha if she believed this? She answered, "Yea, Lord, I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God."

And now Martha became quite uneasy at Mary's absence. She sent to call her secretly: and then Mary arose, and came to meet Jesus.

He had not yet gone into the town, but was

still in the same place where Martha had met Him. Many Jews followed Mary, thinking she was going to the grave to weep there. When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews that were with her weeping, his tender spirit was much troubled, and "Jesus wept"! The Jews talked together as they went along. Some said, "Could not this man have prevented his dying? He opened the eyes of the blind; surely He might have saved Lazarus."

At last they came to the grave. It was a cave, and a large stone was laid on it. Jesus said, "Take away the stone." Martha told Him that, as the body had been four days in the grave, it must be already in a state of decay. Jesus only answered her by repeating that if she would believe, she should see the glory of God. The stone was taken away. Jesus prayed for a moment, and then cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth." Immediately he that was dead came forth, bound round with grave clothes, and his face covered with a napkin. Jesus said, "Loose him, and let him go."

Do you not know, dear children, that a day is coming when all who are in their graves shall hear the Saviour's voice, and shall come forth? (John v. 28.) Oh! what an awful call will that be to those who have died in their sins; but oh! how blessed to those who have loved the Saviour here on earth? How joyfully will *they* rise to meet Him when they hear his voice! They will not come out of their graves in the same poor, vile bodies, which they had before they died. Those will have turned to dust, and instead of them Jesus will give them glorious bodies like his own (Phil. iii. 21), and they shall be with Him and like Him for ever.

Dear children, pray that you may learn to love Jesus *now*, and then it will not signify whether you are alive when He comes again, or whether your bodies have lain in the grave for a few years. When He does come, those who have died in the faith and love of Jesus shall rise *first*; then his own people who are alive on the earth shall be caught up together with them, to meet the Lord

in the air ; and so shall we ever be with the Lord.
(1 Thess. iv. 18.)

You have now heard of three dead bodies which were raised to life by the power of Jesus. Try and remember who they were. 1st. The little daughter of Jairus—she was only just dead. 2d. The young son of the widow at Nain—he was being carried to the grave. 3d. The third had been buried four days—this was Lazarus.

I think you will wonder very much when you hear that only *some* of the Jews who had seen Lazarus raised from the dead believed. The rest went to the Pharisees, and told them what was done. They were more enraged than ever against Jesus, and were determined He should be put to death.

CHAPTER XIX.

JESUS WORKING MORE MIRACLES.

I HAVE missed two or three miracles which I ought to have told you about before this, because I wished you to hear all about the happy family at Bethany at once. A poor man, who was deaf, and could not speak plainly, was brought to Jesus. At his word the man's ears were opened, and the string of his tongue loosed, so that he could both hear and speak. A blind man, too, who sat by the wayside, begging, had his eyes opened, so that he could see perfectly. Perhaps this man had not been blind all his life. We are not told whether he had or not; but now I am going to tell you of one who was *born* blind. When Jesus was at Jerusalem, He met this poor man. He was thirty years old, and yet he had never seen the light of the glorious sun, or any of those things which we admire so much. All those years he had lived in

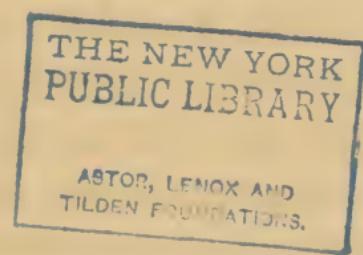
total darkness. How dreadful this must have been ! We are not told that he came to Jesus to be healed. It rather seems as if Jesus took pity on him. When He saw him, He stopped, spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle. This clay He spread on the man's eyes. Then He told him to go and wash in the pool of Siloam. You know that neither the clay nor the water of the pool could make the poor man to see. *He* knew this too, but still he obeyed. He went and washed, and immediately he found that he could see ! Can you fancy how great his wonder must have been ? Oh, how many things he would have to look at ; every face, every animal, every tree, every flower, would be new to him ! How he would stop and look at them again and again !

When he got back among his friends and neighbors they were almost as much surprised. "What !" said they, "is not this he that sat and begged ?" Some said, "Yes, it is ;" others said, "He is like him." Then they asked him how it was that he had his eyes opened. He told them

exactly what had been done. The Jews who had not known him would not believe that he had ever been blind,—so they called his father and mother to ask them. They were quite sure he was their son, and that he had been born blind; but they would not own that they knew who had opened his eyes. They were afraid to say it was Jesus, because of the rage of the Jews against Him; so they said, “He is of age, ask him.” Again, and again, did they question him, till he was quite tired of answering them. They were quite determined not to believe on Jesus; and at last when the poor man declared that Jesus was “of God,” they grew so angry that they cast him out from among them. But Jesus found him, in his new trouble. He asked him, “Dost thou believe on the Son of God?” Now the poor man did not know that Jesus was the Son of God; but as soon as Jesus told Him who He was, he cried out, “Lord, I believe,” and worshipped Him. How happy must he have been now! Not only had he the sight

of his bodily eyes, but his *soul* had been filled with light, for he had learnt to know Jesus. Jesus calls Himself “the Light of the world.” (John viii. 12.)

We are all born blind, dear children ! You know, I do not mean that we cannot see with our eyes ; but that our *hearts* are blind, so that we cannot see the things of God. It is only the light of the glorious Gospel of Jesus Christ, shining into our hearts, that can cure this blindness. (2 Cor. iv. 4.) Beg of God, then, that He will shine into your hearts—then you will be turned from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God.



ASTOR, LENOX AND
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CHAPTER XX.

JESUS BLESSING LITTLE CHILDREN.

AND now I am sure you will like to know what Jesus did when some little children were brought to Him. Some good mothers longed that their dear children should be touched and blessed by the Saviour. The disciples thought that it was of no use to trouble Jesus about such little creatures, so they tried to send them away. But did Jesus think they were too young to be noticed by Him? Oh, no! He was much displeased with the disciples. Then calling the little ones to Him, He said, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God." "And He took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them!" Does not this remind you of your little hymn?—

“ I think when I read that sweet story of old,
When Jesus dwelt here among men,
And called little children as lambs to his fold,
I should like to have been with them then.

“ I wish that his hands had been put on my head,
And that I had been placed on his knee,
And that I might have seen his kind look when He
said,
‘ Let the little ones come unto me.’ ”

Ah ! dear children, I do not wonder at your wishing this ! But do you not know that *your* parents, too, have taken *you* to Jesus ? If they love Him themselves, I am sure they gave you to Him as soon as you were born. But that is not what I mean. Did you never see a little baby baptized ? Well ! when you were a little infant, your dear parents took you to God’s house, there to be publicly received into “ the congregation of Christ’s flock.” His minister took you in his arms, and prayed earnestly that Jesus would receive and bless you, as He did those little children of old. He then sprinkled water on your face, say-

ing, "I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

You will see (Matt. xxviii. 19,) that before Jesus went up to heaven, He commanded that all nations should be baptized "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." So you see we were only doing as Jesus commanded, when we took you to Him in baptism. After this the minister made the sign of a cross on your foreheads, "in token that hereafter you shall not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified, and manfully to fight under his banner against sin, the world, and the devil, and to continue Christ's faithful soldiers and servants unto your life's end." You could not promise these things yourselves, for you could not speak, or understand anything that was done; so your parents had asked three good people, who loved Jesus themselves, to come and promise for you. They, you know, were called God-fathers and God-mothers. But now remember, they only promised for you, because you were too young to do it for yourselves.

Each one of you must feel that as soon as ever you are old enough to understand, you must earnestly seek God's grace, that you may fulfill what they promised and vowed for you. And this is *the* way in which you must *come* to Jesus *yourselves*; as the hymn goes on:—

“ Yet still to my Saviour in prayer I may go,
And ask for a share in his love ! ”

I have kept you rather long about this, because I am very anxious you should understand how *you too*, dear children, have been brought to Jesus.

CHAPTER XXI.

JESUS TEACHING BY PARABLES.

AND now I think you will be glad to hear that I have some more very sweet parables to teach you.

One day, when Jesus was dining in a Pharisee's house, He taught the people who were there in this way: "A certain man made a great supper, and invited many people to come to it. At supper-time he sent out his servants to tell them that all was ready. And now these people found out that they had other things to do, so that they could not find time to go to the feast. One of them had bought a piece of ground, and he said he must go and look at it; another had bought six yoke of oxen, and was going to prove them: so *he* could not go; another had married a wife, and therefore *he* could not go. Do you not think the master would be very angry when he found

that none of those men would trouble themselves to go to his supper ? Indeed he was. He desired his servants to go quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and to bring in the most needy and wretched creatures they could find. When they had done this, there was still plenty of room. The lord then sent them into the highways and hedges, to bring in any poor travellers or strangers whom they could find, that his house might be filled.

Now I hope you know what is meant by this feast: it is the Gospel of the grace of God. I think Jesus meant to teach the Jews that this Gospel had been offered to them. They had been invited to the feast; but they would not receive Him, nor believe his word, so they would not *come*. Therefore the Gentiles would next be invited.

There is something, too, for *us* to learn from this parable. We are all invited to the feast spoken of. “ Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money;

come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." (Isaiah lv. 1.) The ministers of Christ are his servants, sent out to tell us that all things are ready. But many begin to make excuses. Some say they are too young; some say they are too busy. But this is very, very sad, and if people go on trifling with God's mercy in this way, they cannot wonder if He should say at last, that they shall not taste of his supper.

But now you shall hear how gracious God is to those who are willing to turn to Him. There are three beautiful parables on this subject. Many publicans and sinners drew near to hear Jesus. The proud Pharisees murmured against Him, for having anything to do with such people. Then it was that Jesus spoke these parables:—

1. If a man had a hundred sheep, and one of them be lost, would he not leave the ninety-and-nine, and go in search of that one, until he found it? And when he did find it he would lay it on his shoulders, and carry it home. All his

friends would come and rejoice with him over the lost sheep.

2. If a woman had ten pieces of silver, and lost one piece, what would she do? Why, she would light a candle, and sweep the house, and look until she found it. She, too, would call all her friends and neighbors together, saying unto them, "Rejoice with me, for I have found my piece which was lost." Just so, Jesus says, "There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth. How wonderful it seems, does it not, dear children, that bright and holy angels in heaven should rejoice over one poor sinner on earth?

Listen to another parable. It is called the Parable of the Prodigal Son. A certain good and kind father had two sons. The younger son could not make himself happy in his father's house, so he wickedly asked his father to give him all the money that was to come to his share. Then he left his home, and went away into a far

country. Oh, how hard his heart must have become, before he could make up his mind to leave such a good father ! Now I dare say he thought he should be very happy ; he could do just as he liked, for no one was there to control him. Very soon he had spent all his money in his wicked pleasures, and now what must he do ? A famine arose in the land, and none but those who were very rich could afford to buy proper food, it was so dear. When he was nearly starved, he went to keep swine for a man who lived in those parts. So little food was allowed him that he would have been thankful to have eaten some of the husks which were given to the swine : but no one gave even these to him. And now he began to come to himself. He began to see his folly and wickedness, and to think of his dear father's house. He knew that there was plenty and to spare *there*, and yet he was perishing with hunger. And then he spoke those beautiful words which you know so well, "I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, Father, I have sinned against

heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son."

Then he set off home. Oh ! how much ashamed and vexed he must have been as he drew near to his father's house ! I should think, too, he must have been a little afraid whether his father would receive him. But his poor father had never ceased to mourn for him, and now when he was yet a great way off, he saw him, had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him. This is the part of the parable in which the Saviour teaches us the love and mercy of God in receiving us after our wandering from Him. The poor father scarcely gave his son time to finish what he had to say ; he turned to the servants, he told them to bring forth the best robe, to put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet. Then they were to kill the fatted calf, and make a great feast. And they began to be merry. But you wonder where the elder brother was. He was in the field: and as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing." He soon

found out from the servants that his brother was come back, and that his father had made a great feast for him. He ought to have been very glad, but proud and wicked thoughts came into his mind, and he would not even come in. His father went out and entreated him, but he was still jealous of his poor returning brother. I think Jesus meant to show the Pharisees what *their* conduct was, when He told them about the elder brother.

You know that these Pharisees prided themselves on their own goodness, and despised others. You shall hear a short parable which Jesus spoke to them. "Two men went up into the Temple to pray, the one a Pharisee, the other a Publican." Now the Pharisee seemed to think he was so good that he had nothing to ask for. So he began to praise himself, and to tell God what good things he had done, and how much better he was than others, especially than "this Publican."

Now, was this prayer? Oh no! dear children,—to pray is, to tell out our wants to God, and to

ask Him for what we feel we need. Just as you ask for bread when you are hungry, so we go to our Heavenly Father for what we want for our souls. But then you see, we must first learn to feel our need.

Now, hear about the poor Publican. He felt that he was a sinner, that unless God had mercy on him he must be lost for ever, and so—he prayed ; not in many words, but in earnest. See how humble he was. “ He stood afar off, and would not so much as lift up his eyes to heaven ; but smote upon his breast saying, God be merciful to me a sinner ! ” Ah, *this* was prayer,—prayer such as God will hear. Jesus tells us we must learn a lesson of humility from this parable. I should like you to learn a text on this subject. St. James says, “ God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble.” (James iv. 6.) And David says, “ The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit : a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.” (Psalm li. 17.) There is just one more short parable about prayer, which I will

tell you of now. Jesus wished to teach us that we must not grow tired of praying, if we do not get what we ask for directly.

There was in a city a wicked judge. He cared neither for God nor man. A poor widow, who was in great trouble, came to beg his help. Now, it was his duty to attend to her, but for some time he took no notice of her. Still she went on, telling him her distress again and again. At last he grew so tired of hearing her cry that he did what she desired of him. Do you remember when Jacob wrestled with the angel, he said "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me"? That is just how we should pray, and God will certainly hear and answer us.

CHAPTER XXII.

JESUS TEACHING AGAIN BY PARABLES.

I THINK you have learned to love these beautiful parables. How kind it was of Jesus to teach in a way which is so easy to understand ! You are now going to hear the parable of the “unjust steward.” A steward is a man who has the charge of his master’s goods, and his duty is to see that a proper use is made of them.

Now, the master in the parable heard that his steward had wasted his goods. So he called him, and asked, “How is it that I hear this of thee ? Give an account of thy stewardship, for thou mayest be no longer steward.” This wicked man now thought of a plan by which he could make friends for himself. This was by cheating his master. He called all those who owed money to his lord, and told them they need only pay part of their debt. One owed one hundred measures of oil;

to him he said, "You may take your bill and write fifty instead of a hundred." And so, you see, he made friends, who would receive him into their houses when he was turned out of his stewardship. This man showed that he was very clever, though he was very wicked and dishonest. We read, "The lord commended him (not Jesus, but his master) for his cleverness."

Jesus says we are to learn from his conduct how much wiser worldly people are about their concerns, than God's people are in the things of God. You cannot yet understand all that is taught in this parable; but you may learn that we are only God's stewards. All we have is His. He commits it to our care, to be used for His glory. When we come to the Parable of the Talents, you will understand this better. You will see now, in the Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus, what a sin it is to spend the money which God has given us in indulging our own selfish wishes and desires.

There was a certain rich man, who was clothed

in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day. Because he was rich, he chose to spend his wealth on *himself*—to have all he could possibly desire. He could deny himself nothing. We do not hear that he was what people would call a wicked man; but his heart was buried in his own selfishness. I am sure you see that *he* was an unfaithful steward. No part of what God had given him was used for his glory or the good of others. A poor beggar who loved God lay from day to day at the rich man's gate, ill and half-starved. Even the dogs had pity on him, for they came and licked his sores, but this selfish man passed by him without feeling the least compassion. At last the beggar died. Oh! what a change for the poor sufferer! In one instant all his sorrows and sufferings were over, and he was at rest for ever. We do not know who took away his poor body or how it was buried; but that was of very little consequence.

A short time after the rich man died. He

was buried with great honor ; but oh ! where was his soul ? Alas ! in hell.

Can you wonder at this, dear children ? Oh ! no. If we would go to heaven when we die, we must get ready for heaven while we live. Just think for a moment how this man had spent his time on earth. He had thought only of what he should eat and drink, and wherewithal he should be clothed. Now, how are those in heaven employed ? They rest not day nor night, praising God and serving Him. Suppose, then, this man *could* have gone to heaven at his death, how miserable he would have been ! But it was not possible that he could enter heaven, for “without holiness no man can see the Lord.” (Heb. xii. 14.)

These words are very awful, “ In hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments,” but oh ! dear children, there is no middle place. If we are not fit for heaven, we *must* go to hell. We are told he saw the poor beggar happy with Abraham in heaven. This must have made him even more

miserable. He begged Abraham to send Lazarus that he might dip his finger in water and cool his burning tongue. Abraham told him this was not possible, for none can pass from heaven to hell or from hell to heaven. When this wretched man found there was no hope for himself, he thought about his five brothers. He wanted Lazarus to be sent to them, to warn them lest they should come to that dreadful place. He thought if some one went to them from the dead, they would repent. "No," said Abraham; "if they do not believe what they read in God's Word, they would not believe if one went to them from the dead."

Let us learn from this parable to give ourselves to God, and then we shall never live a life of self-indulgence. You know Jesus says, "If any man will come after me, let him *deny* himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." (Matt. xvi. 24.) You must try while you are children to deny yourselves in little things. This will make

it easier to you to give up in great things when you are older.

There is just one more parable about another rich man which I should like you to hear. This man's ground brought forth such large crops that he was puzzled to know where to stow them away. He made up his mind to pull down his barns and to build greater. Now, this was all very well. If God give us plenty, He means us to take care of it. But now hear what he said to himself. He made sure he should live many years. He said to his soul, "Soul, take thine ease: eat, drink, and be merry." Like the other rich man, you see, he thought only of himself. But what did God say to him? "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee"—that is, "This night thou shalt die."

Why did God call him a fool? Because he had never thought about getting ready for another world. Remember that none are so foolish as those who neglect their souls. What good could all this man's riches do him when he was

called to die? We must learn how little we can reckon on living long. I should like you to learn a text about this;—“ Go to now, ye that say, To-day or to-morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. For that ye ought to say, *If the Lord will*, we shall live, and do this or that.”
(James iv. 13—15.)

CHAPTER XXIII.

JESUS ON HIS WAY TO JERUSALEM.

I AM now going to tell you something which shows the love and mercy of Jesus wonderfully. Once, when He was on his way to Jerusalem, He sent his disciples to a village in Samaria, asking the people to receive Him on his journey. The Samaritans would not receive Him because He was going on to Jerusalem, and they so hated the Jews. James and John were very angry, and wanted to call down fire from heaven on them, as Elijah had once done. But Jesus told them they did not know what spirit they were of.

You know He teaches us to love our enemies, to bless them that curse us, and to pray for them that despitefully use us, and persecute us. (Matt. v. 44.) The meek and lowly Saviour taught us this by his example. Some time after, He was passing through Samaria again. As He was en-

tering a village there met Him ten wretched men who were lepers. One of them was a Samaritan, the other nine were Jews. They cried to Jesus, "Master, have mercy on us." He told them to go and show themselves to the priest. This was what lepers were commanded to do by the law of Moses. I think they must have felt disappointed that Jesus did not cure them at once, as He had done others. But they set out, and as they went they found their leprosy was healed. I am sure you will expect to hear that they all turned back directly to give thanks to Jesus. But, no! Only *one* of the ten returned. It was the poor Samaritan who turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God. Jesus asked, "Were there not ten cleansed, but where are the nine?" Where, indeed? I am afraid many cry to God for mercy when they are sick or in trouble, who forget to thank Him when they are relieved. Let us learn that ingratitude is a great sin, and let us be very thankful to our gracious Father for all his mercies.

One day Jesus passed through the town of Jericho. In this town lived a rich man named Zaccheus. He was the chief of the Publicans. Now Zaccheus had a great desire to see Jesus, but this was not an easy matter, for there was a great crowd round the Saviour. Zaccheus, too, was a very short man, which made it more difficult for him. But Zaccheus was really in earnest, so he did not give up for a little difficulty. He ran before the crowd, and climbed up a tree by the road-side. When Jesus came opposite to the tree, He looked up and saw Zaccheus. You know *why* He looked up, do you not? Oh, yes! the Saviour had seen what was in that man's heart, and He meant to show mercy to Zaccheus. So looking up He cried, "Zaccheus, make haste and come down." Oh, how surprised Zaccheus must have been to hear himself called by name! He had no idea that Jesus would *see* him, much less that He would speak to him as if He knew him. But more than this, the Saviour told him He meant to stay at his house. Was not this joy

for poor Zaccheus? He came down with all haste, and received Jesus joyfully. And now you will see what a change took place in the heart of Zaccheus. You will see this, by the change in his conduct. Before that time he had been like other Publicans, who got all they could from the people in many unjust ways. But now he was quite changed. Instead of setting his heart on getting as much money as ever he could, he said he was willing to give half his goods to the poor, and if he had done wrong to any man, he would restore him four times as much.

Dear children, you may be sure that when the grace of God comes into the heart, it will soon be seen by a change of life. Learn a little text on this subject: "If any man be in Christ he is a new creature." (2 Cor. v. 17.)

Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem. As He drew near it the people who were with Him seemed to think He was going to reign there as a king. This was the great mistake the Jews made about Jesus. They thought that when the prom-

ised Saviour came, He would come in grandeur, and be a king.

Jesus taught them, by a parable, what a mistake they had made. He said, "A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return." This was to teach them that He would one day reign, though not then. Before the nobleman went away, he called his ten servants, and gave them ten pounds. He told them to make a good use of their money until he came again. After a time, when he had received the kingdom, he returned. Then those servants were called to give an account of the way in which they had used the money. The first came saying, "Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds." "Well done, thou good servant," said the Lord, "because thou hast been faithful over a very little, thou shalt rule over ten cities." Then came the second saying, "Lord, thy pound hath gained five pounds." His Lord told him he should rule over five cities. At last came an idle servant, who had done nothing with

his Lord's money. He had hid it in a napkin, without trying to make any use of it. His lord commanded that the pound should be taken away from the slothful servant, and given to the one who had ten pounds. In another parable, which is very like this (Matt. xxv.), we are told that the unprofitable servant was to be cast into outer darkness, where was weeping and gnashing of teeth.

We must learn from this, dear children, that God expects us to make a good use of the talents He gives us. Perhaps you think that as you are so young, you have no talents *yet*; but indeed you have. Try and think. What are you now doing? You are listening while God's word is explained to you. This very learning, then, is a talent. Are you making a good use of it? I could tell you of other talents which God has given you. Some of us have more than others. Our health, our money, our time, our knowledge, are all talents, which we must use in God's service and for His glory.

CHAPTER XXIV.

JESUS AT JERUSALEM FOR THE LAST TIME.

A FEW days before the passover Jesus went to Bethany, where Martha and Mary lived. Simon the leper made him a supper. Martha served, and Lazarus was at table with Him. But where was Mary? She had not forgotten to find out a way of showing her love to her Lord. She brought an alabaster box of ointment, very precious. Some she poured on his head, with the rest she anointed his feet. The smell of the ointment was so powerful that the whole house was full of it. This ointment cost a great deal of money, but Mary thought nothing too much to spend on her Saviour. One of the disciples (Judas) did not think so. He asked why such a waste had been made, and why the ointment was not sold, and the money given to the poor. Do you think Judas really cared for the poor? Oh, no! we

are told he did not. I am sorry to tell you, Judas was a very wicked man, and a great hypocrite. He carried the bag or purse in which the money was kept, to buy what was needful for our Lord and his disciples. I am afraid this wicked man had often taken money from this bag, for we read, "He was a thief." Jesus knew what was in the heart of Judas, but He took no notice of it now. He only said that Mary had done a good work, and that wherever the Gospel should be preached, in the whole world, this work of hers should be told. And so it is, for you find it written in three of the Gospels. Thus every one who reads God's Word knows about Mary and her love to Jesus. I think we may learn from her example to deny ourselves, that we may have something to give to God.

How many things Mary might have bought for herself, with the money which the ointment cost! But do you think any of these things would have made her so happy as she was in spending the money for her Saviour?

Lazarus, I told you, was at supper with Jesus. Many persons came together to see him, and some of them believed in Jesus. This made the chief priests so angry that they determined to kill Lazarus. I think you remember the words in the parable, "If they believe not Moses and the prophets, neither will they believe though one rose from the dead." Here was a man who *had* risen from the dead, and yet these wicked men not only would not believe themselves, but wanted to kill him lest others should believe.

And now we have come to the history of our Saviour's last visit to Jerusalem. When He and his disciples came near the city, to the Mount of Olives, He sent two of them to the next village on a very wonderful errand. He told them exactly where they would find an ass and her colt tied. They were to loose them, and bring them to Jesus. But suppose the man to whom the animals belonged asked them, why they were loosing them? they were to say, "The Lord hath need of them." All happened exactly as Jesus

had said. The owner allowed the disciples to bring away the ass and colt. They put some of their garments on the colt, and Jesus rode thereon.

Perhaps you are wondering why Jesus chose to ride at this time. He had taken so many long journeys on foot, and besides, He was now very near Jerusalem. In the prophecy of Zechariah, Jesus was spoken of as "a king, lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass." (Zech. ix. 9.) This was said of Him nearly five hundred years before He came, and every word which the holy prophets had spoken about Him must be fulfilled. The people came out to meet Jesus in great numbers. They cast their clothes in the way, and many cut down branches, and strawed them in the way. All with one voice shouted, saying, "Hosanna to the Son of David; blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord." I am afraid many of these people were among the number who a few days after cried, "Crucify Him, crucify Him."

And now Jesus was getting near to the city. As soon as He saw it, He wept over it. Do you wonder why the blessed Jesus shed tears? It was because He knew what dreadful troubles would come on that wicked city. He knew that the Romans would come up, and destroy it, laying it even with the ground. And this is what really took place in less than seventy years. Titus, a Roman general, came against Jerusalem. He had a high wall built round it, so that no one could go out or in. The wretched Jews suffered the most dreadful famine, and at last were obliged to give up. Then the beautiful Temple was burnt, and Titus made his soldiers plough up the very foundations of it, so that really "not one stone was left on another." And why was all this? Jesus says, "Because thou knewest not the day of thy visitation." This means, that it had been visited with God's mercy, but had rejected it. He had sent prophets, and them the Jews had despised and killed. Now they were going to kill Jesus also. But, in spite of all their wicked-

ness, Jesus mourned over them. Hear his beautiful words, which He spoke a short time after this: "Oh Jerusalem, Jerusalem, . . . how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not."

When Jesus arrived at Jerusalem, He went into the Temple. He found in it people buying and selling, just as He had done when He first went into it to preach and teach. Jesus turned them all out: "My house," He said, "shall be called the house of prayer, but ye have made it a den of thieves." After this, many lame and blind people came to Him in the Temple, and He healed them. Little children too were there, crying, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" The chief priests were very angry when they heard them; but Jesus asked them, if they had never read what David said, "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings, thou hast perfected praise." (Psalm viii. 2.) Which means that *little children* should sing the praises of Jesus.

Jesus did not stay in Jerusalem all night. He used to lodge at Bethany. One morning as He was returning to Jerusalem, He was hungry, and seeing a fig tree, He went up to gather fruit off it. But this fig tree, though it had leaves, had no fruit. Jesus cursed it, saying, "Let no figs grow on thee henceforth," and presently it withered away. While Jesus was at Jerusalem, He often spoke to the Scribes and Pharisees. He once taught them their own hypocrisy by a parable. He said, "A certain man had two sons. He came to the first, and said, 'Son, go and work to-day in my vineyard.' He said, 'I will not,' but afterward he repented and went. Then he said to the second, 'Go work in my vineyard.' He answered, 'I go, Sir,' but went not." Jesus asked them which of these two was obedient to his father? They were obliged to say that the first was. Then He told them that they were like the second son, for they pretended to be anxious to obey God's commands, yet they rejected Him who was sent by God.

CHAPTER XXIV.

JESUS AT JERUSALEM.

JESUS spoke another parable to show how all the Jewish people had acted. "There was a certain man who planted a vineyard, and hedged it about, and digged a winepress in it, and built a tower." Now this is just what God says (Isaiah v. 1) that *He* had done. He calls the Jewish people his vineyard. "And He fenced it and gathered out the stones, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a winepress in it." (Isaiah v. 2.) Jesus went on, "He let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country for a long time." When the right season came, the lord of the vineyard sent his servants for the fruit, but the wicked husbandmen beat some, wounded some, and killed others. This was just what the Jews had done to the

prophets and righteous men whom God had sent to them from time to time. Then said the lord of the vineyard, "What shall I do ? I will send my beloved son ; they will reverence him." But when the wicked husbandmen saw the son they said, "This is the heir, come, let us kill him." So they cast him out of the vineyard, and killed him. Then Jesus asked, "When the lord of the vineyard cometh what will he do to those wicked husbandmen ?" They answered, "He will miserably destroy them, and give the vineyard to others." I think they did not know that they were speaking against themselves. But Jesus told them that the kingdom of God should be taken from them, and given to another nation, that is, to the Gentiles. When the Scribes and Pharisees found out that Jesus was speaking to them they were so full of rage that they would have laid hands on Him at once, but they dared not, because all the people looked upon Jesus as a prophet. At the same time Jesus spoke another parable, so much like the one I told you about

—the king who made a great supper, that I shall not go through it ; but one thing is mentioned in this parable which is not in the other. The king ordered that every one who came to his feast should wear a particular dress. You may be sure the king provided this dress, for you remember the people who were brought in by the servants were poor creatures out of the lanes, highways, and hedges. When they were all seated at table, the king came in to see the guests. One man was there in his own dress. The king said to him, “Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having on a wedding garment ?” What excuse could he make ? He had nothing to say, for he knew before he came that he was not in a dress fit for the king’s table. He knew, too, that a proper dress was ready for him, but he had not chosen to wear it, so he was speechless. Hear his awful sentence, “Bind him hand and foot,” said the king, “and take him away into outer darkness ; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

Oh ! dear children, are you not longing to know what this wedding garment is, without which not one of us can enter heaven ? You may be sure it is no righteousness of our own, for we read, "Our righteousnesses are as filthy rags." (Isaiah lxiv. 6.) No ; it is the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. He died, you know, to wash away our sins in his most precious blood. He bore our sins in his own body on the tree ; so that when we truly believe in Him He takes away our sins, and puts upon us, instead, his own spotless righteousness. This robe is provided for every one of us ; and it is our own fault if we have it not. I am afraid some people think that because they are better than some others, and have never done anything outwardly wicked, as stealing or murdering, they will be able to get to heaven as they are. This is an awful mistake. The very best man in the world will never be received into heaven unless he has felt himself to be " wretched, and miserable, poor, blind, and naked." (Rev. iii. 17.) And unless he has got that " white rai-

ment" (Rev. iii. 18) which I have told you of. Ask God, dear children, to clothe you in that pure and spotless robe of which your sweet hymn speaks:—

"In flowing robes of spotless white
See every one arrayed,
Dwelling in everlasting light,
And joys that never fade:
Singing, Glory! glory! glory!"

CHAPTER XXVI.

JESUS AT JERUSALEM.

You have heard a great deal about the Pharisees, but I have not yet told you anything about the Sadducees. These were a set of people who did not believe that the body would ever rise again, or that the soul would live for ever either in heaven or hell. Some of these Sadducees came to Jesus, and tried to puzzle Him with questions about what would happen if we *were* to rise again. Jesus told them plainly that the reason they did not understand the subject was that they did not know the Scriptures. When these bodies rise again, they will not be as they now are. We shall be like the angels. It is of no use to ask how we shall live, or what we shall do, for this no tongue can tell ; but of one thing we may be sure —we shall be perfectly holy and perfectly happy. I should like you to learn a text which makes

all God's people very happy:—"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and *it doth not yet appear what we shall be*: but we know that, when He (Jesus) shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is." (1 John iii. 2.) Surely this is enough for us to know. After this Jesus spoke out very plainly about the Pharisees and Scribes. He warned the people not to do as they did, for though they were very fair outside, and pretended to be very good, even making long prayers, yet God, who saw into their hearts, knew that they were full of every kind of wickedness and hypocrisy. Jesus told them what would be the end of their wicked ways; but we do not hear that one turned to God. See what an awful thing it is when the heart gets hardened in sin.

Jesus was sitting near the Treasury. This was a place into which people cast what they wished to give for God's service. Many rich people came and put in large sums of money. At last came a poor widow, and cast in two mites, which make a farthing. Very likely if

some of those rich people had known what she was casting in they would have laughed at and despised her. Do you think Jesus despised her too? Oh! no. He knew far more than they could know, for He knew what was in her heart. And hear what He says:—"This poor widow hath cast in more than they all." *They* had plenty left after their rich gifts, "but *she* had cast in all that she had, even all her living."

So you see, dear children, God does not so much think *what* we give as *why* we give. Jesus once said that even a cup of cold water given to one of his people, out of love to Him, should be rewarded. Let us try to do all we do, and to give all we give, out of love to our dear Saviour, and He will be sure to accept and bless it.

While Jesus was sitting near the Temple, his disciples began to speak to Him about the beautiful building. It was then that Jesus told them how soon the Temple would be destroyed. When they were alone with Him afterwards on the Mount of Olives, they asked Him *when* these

things should be. Jesus then told them of many things which would happen just before those dreadful troubles came on the Jews. He told them, too, that when they saw Jerusalem surrounded by soldiers they were to escape and flee away to the mountains. And when the Roman armies were all around, God permitted the Christians to get out of the city in a very wonderful manner. A great many of them fled to a village called Pella, and many more to the mountains, so that *all* the Christians were saved, although a million of Jews perished. Jesus also spoke to his disciples about his coming again. Now, I am afraid there are many wicked people who never even think that Jesus will one day really come again. Some, perhaps, say, "Where is the promise of his coming? I see nothing different from what always has been." Now, this is only what Jesus said would happen. Just as it was in Noah's day, when no one would believe that the flood would come, and just as it was in Lot's day, when the wicked people of Sodom would not listen to Lot's

preaching, *so* it will be until the very moment when the Saviour comes again. Everything will go on as usual till the sign of the Son of man is seen in the heavens, and *every eye* shall see Him. There will be no time then to get ready to receive Him, for Jesus says his coming will be like a flash of lightning. Oh! how dreadful that moment will be for all who have never turned to God. They will call on the mountains and rocks to fall on them and hide them. Once they might have had Jesus for their Saviour, but they would not; and now they are lost for ever. But what does Jesus say to us all? He says:—"Watch therefore." "Be ye also ready, for in an hour when ye think not the Son of man cometh." To make this more plain, Jesus spoke a beautiful parable. I must tell you first that the Jews had a very different way from ours of keeping a wedding. After the marriage, the husband (or bridegroom) used to go in the evening to fetch his wife home by the light of lamps. Several young women (or virgins) used to carry these lamps. Now,

you will understand the parable better. Jesus said, "The kingdom of God is like to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom." Five of these women were wise, and five were foolish. The wise took their lamps ready trimmed and well filled with oil. The others took their lamps too, but they had no supply of oil with them. This was foolish indeed. The bridegroom did not come so soon as they expected, and all fell asleep. At last, at midnight, the cry was heard, "The bridegroom cometh ; go ye out to meet him." The wise virgins were ready in a moment, for you know they had plenty of oil in their vessels with their lamps. But what could the foolish virgins do ? Their lamps were gone out for want of oil. Their first thought was to beg some from their wise companions, but they had none to give away ; and while these foolish women were gone to try and buy oil, the bridegroom came. Those who were ready went in with him, and the door was shut. What must the others have felt when they came back and

found that they could not get in? Ah! and what will those feel who are not ready when Jesus returns? He, you know, is meant by the bridegroom. We are waiting for his coming. It seems a long, long time before He comes, and I am afraid even God's people sometimes fall asleep—I mean they do not watch as they should do for their Lord! But now how will it be when He really does come? Why, I am afraid that a great many people who *seem* to be Christians have been "foolish"—that is, they have never got the grace of God into their hearts. They may have gone to church, and done many things which made their lamp seem to burn for a time; but if they have never gone to Jesus for pardon, they have not the oil of his grace, and their lamps will go out.

I need not tell you who the wise are. I am sure your own little hearts tell you. Ask God, dear children, to give you his Holy Spirit, to make you really wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

CHAPTER XXVII.

JESUS AT JERUSALEM.

AFTER this, Jesus went on to speak more about the day of judgment. Oh ! what a wonderful day that will be. Hear what He says :—“ When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit on the throne of his glory ; and before Him shall be gathered all nations ; and He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats.” I should like you to read how St. John describes this great day :—“ And I saw a great white throne, and Him that sat upon it, from whose face the heaven and earth fled away ; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God ; and the books were opened : and another book was opened, which is the book

of life : and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it : and death and hell (or the grave) delivered up the dead which were in them. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." Oh ! is not this a very solemn account ? Do not your hearts say while you hear it, "Oh ! Lord, *do* let me be written in that book of life"? Now, hear the sweet words which the King shall say to his sheep, or those on his right hand,—"Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you." Then He will go on to mention some of the kind things they have done out of love to Him. "I was hungry, and ye fed me," &c. (Matt. xxv. 35.) They will be quite surprised that Jesus should remember any of their kind actions ; but He will tell them that, while they were showing kindness to one of the poorest and lowest of his people, He looked upon what they did as if it was really done *to himself*. Then will come the

awful sentence to those on the left hand, “Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.”

Jesus does not here say that they will be told of all their wickedness, though we know that every wicked thought, word, and action *will* appear against them. But they will be told, too, of what they had *not* done. They never did one thing out of love to Jesus, or gave up one thing for his people. And oh ! what a dreadful sentence ! “These shall go away into everlasting punishment !” Did you ever really think what *everlasting* means ? Try to imagine that, when thousands and thousands of years have passed away, the wicked will be no nearer coming out of that fearful place than at the first moment when they were cast into that “lake of fire.”

And think, too, *what* the punishment will be ! It will be not only being driven away for ever from God, Jesus, holy angels, and all the good people who have ever lived. This would be a grievous punishment, but this is not all. Oh, no ! those

who do not go to heaven, must be forever shut up with Satan, and his horrid angels, and with all the wicked men who ever lived ; and shut up—where ? In a lake of fire, where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. Dear children, does not the prayer rise in your hearts, Lord Jesus, make me thine now, and oh ! let me stand at thy right hand at that great day !

CHAPTER XXVIII.

JESUS EATING THE PASSOVER WITH HIS DISCIPLES.

AND now the time was coming very near when Jesus was to suffer and die. I shall try to tell you everything which is written about our dear Saviour during those last solemn days. You remember that Jesus had gone into Jerusalem riding on the ass, a day or two before, and it was at Jerusalem, or near to it, that he spoke to his disciples, as I told you in my last chapter. I am sure you remember, too, how much the anger of the chief priests and scribes had been roused against Him many times, so that they longed for an opportunity of taking Him. I hope, too, you have not forgotten what I told you about one of the twelve disciples. Judas, you know, was angry at the waste of precious ointment, and I told you then that wicked thoughts had entered his heart, and that he was really a thief. And now

this wicked man went on to commit the most awful sins. "The love of money is the root of all evil." (1 Tim. vi. 10.) It is often called in the Bible, covetousness. Judas was covetous, and by degrees his heart became so hard that he did not mind what he did, if he could but get money. The chief priests and scribes were wondering how they should contrive to take Jesus. They were afraid of an uproar among the people. Judas came to them, and said, "I will manage to lead you to Him, so that you can easily take Him, if you will give me money." They were glad, and agreed to give him thirty pieces of silver. This was only about twenty dollars. Does it not seem wonderful, that, for that little sum, he should have agreed to betray his Lord and Master? But we read, "Satan had entered into him." Judas had hardened his heart by little and little against the blessed lessons which he learned from Jesus, and now he was given up to the power of Satan.

Oh! learn, dear children, to strive against the

first risings of sin in your heart. Listen to that voice within, which tells you, you are wrong. If you do not, depend upon it, the voice will grow weaker, and sin will grow stronger every year you live.

And now the day was come when the passover was to be killed and eaten. I should like you to remember all about this feast. I am sure you know that once the people of Israel were in Egypt serving the cruel Pharaoh. God sent Moses and Aaron to desire that he would let them go. Pharaoh would not, and God sent dreadful plagues on him and his people. The last of these was the most dreadful. God determined that the eldest son in every house should die in one night. He desired Moses to tell the people of Israel to make ready a lamb for every family. On the evening of the day when God intended to bring this dreadful punishment on the Egyptians, the Israelites were to kill this lamb. They were to take some of the blood and to strike it on the two side posts and upper door posts of the houses. What

was this for? "When the Lord seeth the blood, He will *pass over* the door, and will not suffer the destroyer to come in unto your houses to destroy you," said Moses. They were then to roast the flesh of the lamb and to eat it, standing, with their staff in their hand, their shoes on their feet, and their loins girded, that is, ready for a journey. That very night they were driven out of Egypt in haste. They were commanded to keep the Feast of the Passover for ever afterwards in remembrance of that wonderful night. The killing of the lamb, and the sprinkling of the blood, was what is called a type of Christ, for He is "*the Lamb of God.*"

And now the time was come when this true Lamb was to be offered once for all. On the morning of that day, the fourteenth day of the first month, Jesus told his disciples to go and prepare the Passover. They had no fit room in which they could eat it; but Jesus directed them to follow a man whom they would meet bearing a pitcher of water. They were to enter into the

house after him, and to ask him for a room in which he and his disciples might eat the Passover. We may suppose that Jesus had inclined the man's heart, for he showed them a large upper-room ready furnished. Here they prepared everything. In the evening, Jesus and his disciples sat down to this last Supper. Judas, too, was there. While they were eating, Jesus began to say that one of them would betray Him. This made them very sorrowful, and they began to ask, one by one, "Lord, is it I?" Now, one of the disciples (John), whom Jesus loved, was leaning on Jesus' bosom. Peter made a sign to John that he should ask who it was. Jesus said, "It is he to whom I shall give a sop (or a morsel) when I have dipped it." And when he had dipped the sop, he gave it to Judas. Judas immediately went out. Before this happened, and when the Supper was *just* ended, Jesus rose from the table, girded a towel round Him, and began to wash his disciples' feet. No doubt this was to teach them a wonderful lesson of humility, for

we read that even while they were at supper they had been striving together who should be the greatest. After this, Jesus took bread and brake it. He gave a piece to each of his disciples, saying, "Take, eat; this is my body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of me." Likewise He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."

It would never again be necessary to keep the Passover, because Christ the true Paschal Lamb was just going to be slain. He offered himself on the cross as the one sacrifice for sin for ever. (Heb. x. 12.) But Jesus commanded all his true people henceforth to partake of the Sacrament which He then ordained. This was almost the last command of our dear Saviour. It does, then, seem very wonderful, that many who profess to love and serve Him never obey *that*, his dying command. Before Jesus and his disciples rose

from table He spoke once more to them about many things. You will find all He said in St. John's Gospel, chapters xiv., xv., xvi. How precious those last words of their Saviour must have been to them! How they would love to talk over them again and again when He was taken away from them! After this he offered up to his Father that beautiful prayer which you can read in the seventeenth chapter of St. John's Gospel, and which I hope you will learn by heart as soon as you are old enough. Then they sang a hymn and went out to the Mount of Olives.

CHAPTER XXIX.

JESUS SUFFERING IN THE GARDEN, AND BETRAYED.

As they were going, Jesus began to say, that all the disciples would forsake Him that night. They were all much shocked at the thought, and said they never would forsake Him. Peter was certain he never could be offended at his Lord, even though every one else was. Jesus told him that *that* very night, before the cock crew, he would deny Him three times. Peter was more and more positive, and said that, even if he should die with Jesus, he would never deny Him. Now there was a garden near the Mount of Olives called Gethsemane, to which Jesus often went with his disciples. They all went there now for the last time. Jesus told his disciples to sit where they were for a time, while he went a little way off to pray. He took with Him Peter, James, and John, and began to be filled with sorrow. Now was the time of the Saviour's

greatest suffering. He told the three disciples his soul was exceeding sorrowful, even unto death. Then He went a little further to pray, and falling on his face He said, "Oh ! my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me ; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt." Jesus had told Peter, James and John to watch with Him ; but when He came back to them they were asleep. Hear how gently He spoke to Peter : "What ! could you not watch with me one hour ?" Jesus then went away again to pray, and we are told that an angel came and strengthened Him. Being in an agony he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground. And what was all this agony ? No one had yet touched Him. Oh, no ! It was not his body that suffered. The agony was in his soul. Jesus was now bearing the wrath of God against sin,—your sin and my sin, dear children ! Yes, we must have borne that agony for ever, had not Jesus borne it for us. Again He came back to his disciples, and again

found them sleeping. "Watch and pray," was the Saviour's kind rebuke. Again He left them, and again found them asleep. The time had come when He was to be betrayed; and while He spoke to his disciples, Judas came near with a number of people sent from the Chief Priests and Scribes with swords and staves. Judas had agreed with them that he would go up to Jesus and kiss Him. As soon as they were come near to Him, he went up to Him, saying, "Hail, Master," and kissed Him. Simon Peter had a sword with him. As soon as he saw that his Master was going to be taken he drew his sword, and cut off the ear of Malchus, a servant of the Chief Priest. But the holy Jesus was kind even to his enemies. In a moment He touched the man's ear, and healed him. He told Peter to put up his sword into its sheath. Do you not know (said Jesus) that if I were to ask my Father He would send me multitudes of angels to defend me from these wicked men? "Then all the disciples forsook Him and fled."

CHAPTER XXX.

JESUS DENIED, MOCKED, AND SCOURGED.

THE captain and officers now took Jesus, and bound Him, and led Him away to the High Priest's palace. The scribes and elders were ready there to receive Him. And where was Peter? Was he at his Master's side, ready to die with Him, as he had promised? Oh, no! He followed afar off, and went into the High Priest's palace, and sat with the servants to see the end. It was cold, and they sat together warming themselves. Was it not wonderful that Peter could bear to sit down among the enemies of his Lord? And now the hour of Peter's greatest temptation was come. One of the servants, looking earnestly at him, said, "This man was also with Him" (meaning with Jesus). Do you not expect that Peter would answer, "Yes, indeed; He is my Lord and Master. I

was with Him, and gladly would I die with Him? But, ah! poor Peter, he is ashamed of his Lord. “Woman,” said he, “I know Him not.” A little while after another said to him, “Thou art also one of his disciples.” Again he answered, “Man, I am not.” Another hour passed away, and again Peter denied that he ever knew Jesus. While he was yet speaking, the cock crew, and the Lord turned and looked upon Peter. Oh! what a look must that have been! It brought to his mind the word which Jesus had spoken—“Before the cock crow thou shalt deny me thrice.” And he went out and wept bitterly.

All this time Jesus was standing and being questioned by the High Priest; the wicked people around, too, were sometimes smiting Him with the palms of their hands, sometimes spitting on Him and mocking Him. Thus that dreadful night passed. As soon as it was light they bound Him afresh, and sent Him away to Pontius Pilate, the Governor. When Judas saw this, he knew

that Jesus would die. Perhaps he had never believed before that it would be really so. He might think He would escape from the hands of his wicked enemies. But now a dreadful horror took hold of his mind. He brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests, cast them down in the Temple, and went out and hanged himself.

I must just stop to show you the difference between Peter's sorrow and Judas's sorrow. St. Paul tells us of two kinds of repentance (2 Cor. vii. 10)—“Godly sorrow and the sorrow of the world.” Peter's was godly sorrow. He really mourned over his sin, and he spent all the rest of his life in the service of his Saviour. The sorrow of Judas was the sorrow of the world, in which there was no sorrow for sin; and this works *death*.

And now the blessed Jesus was standing before Pilate. Pilate asked him many questions, but Jesus answered nothing. If you look at Isaiah liii. 7, you will see that this was foretold of Him:

—“As a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He openeth not his mouth.”

The wicked King Herod was at Jerusalem, and Pilate sent Jesus to him to be questioned. Herod, you remember, had long wished to see Jesus, and now he was very glad. He hoped he should see a miracle done by Jesus. But Jesus was again quite silent—“He opened not his mouth.” This made Herod very angry. He brought in his soldiers that they might mock the Saviour. Then, putting on Him a robe of bright colors, he sent Him back to Pilate. Now, I think that Pilate wished to set Jesus free. His wife, too, had sent to him to beg he would not have anything to do with *that just man*. She had had a dream about Him which had distressed her mind very much. So Pilate went out to the people, who were gathered together in great numbers, and told them he could find no fault in Jesus. When they heard this, they all cried out, “Crucify Him, crucify Him.” Now, it was the custom at the Feast of the Passover that some

one prisoner should be set free. Pilate asked them, "Shall I set this man free?" "No, no," said the people, "we will not have this man; we will have Barabbas." Now, Barabbas had been cast into prison for committing murder. He was a robber, too; and yet they would rather have this wicked man set free than the holy and blessed Jesus.

When Pilate saw that they were determined to kill Jesus, he took water and washed his hands before all the people, saying, "I am innocent of the blood of this just person; see ye to it." All the people cried out with one voice, "His blood be on us and on our children." They meant they were quite willing to bear all the guilt of putting Jesus to death.

Oh! how little they knew what they were saying. Oh! what dreadful sorrow did they bring on themselves and on their children. Up to this very time (that is, for more than eighteen hundred years) the poor Jews have been suffer-

ing the wrath of God which they then called down on their heads.

Then Pilate had Jesus scourged. (Why did he do this if knew He was innocent?) And he gave Him up to the will of the people. The whole band of soldiers were now gathered round the Saviour. They stripped Him, put on Him a scarlet robe (which only kings wore), plaited a crown of thorns and put it on his head, put a reed in his right hand, and bowed the knee, mocking Him, and saying, “Hail, King of the Jews!” Then they spat on Him and smote Him on the head. When they had mocked and tormented him as much as they pleased, they stripped Him again and put his own robe on Him, and led Him away to crucify Him.

Oh ! dear children, are not your hearts very sad ? See how this blessed Lamb of God suffered for you. Do you not hate sin ? It was *that* which nailed your Saviour to the accursed tree.

CHAPTER XXXI.

JESUS CRUCIFIED.

By this time, you may be sure, the Saviour's body was worn out with fatigue. He set out, bearing his own cross; but before He had carried it far, his cruel enemies found that He would faint under the weight. They therefore laid it on a man named Simon, who was coming out of the country. He bore it to a place called Golgotha. There they gave the blessed Jesus vinegar and gall to drink, but He would not drink. The limbs of the Saviour were then stretched on the cross and nailed to it. Then it was lifted up, and firmly set in the ground. This was at twelve o'clock at noon. Two thieves were crucified, one on each side of Jesus. One of these, in the midst of his own agony, mocked Jesus. The other was led, at this last hour, to feel his sinfulness, and to look on Jesus as his Saviour. While all

around were mocking, this poor man prayed, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." Jesus answered his prayer, "This day thou shalt be with me in paradise." Three women were standing by the cross; Mary, the mother of Jesus, her sister, and Mary Magdalene. John, the beloved disciple, was standing there too. Can you not think how their hearts must have been bursting with sorrow? In the midst of his own sufferings Jesus did not forget them. Speaking to his mother, He said, "Woman, behold thy son!" Then turning to John, He said, "Behold thy mother!" And from that hour John took Mary to his own home. For three whole hours was Jesus hanging in the most dreadful suffering. During all that time darkness covered the whole land. The wretched people continued doing all they could to insult and abuse Him, but not one word of murmuring, or of anger, escaped the lips of the blessed Saviour. Once, indeed, He spoke of his enemies; He said, "Father, forgive them, for they know

not what they do." Again He cried to his Father, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" This was the most fearful part of his sufferings, but it was almost the last. Soon after, Jesus said, "I thirst." They that were near filled a sponge with vinegar, and put it on a reed, and lifted it up to him. When Jesus had received the vinegar, He said, "It is finished," and crying with a loud voice, He gave up the ghost—that is, *He died*. At this awful moment, the earth did quake, rocks were rent, the veil of the Temple, which hung before the Most Holy Place, was torn in pieces. Some graves, too, were opened, and many good people who had long been buried rose after the Lord's resurrection, and went into Jerusalem, and appeared to many.

Oh! my children, I hope your hearts are moved to love this precious Saviour, for why did He endure these wonderful sufferings? It was all *for us*. He bore all this, and far, far more than we can ever know, that we might not bear

the wrath of God for ever. Think of this when you are inclined to be naughty. Say, “Can I do this wickedness, when my dear Saviour suffered so much for me?”

I must just show you how wonderfully all that had been foretold about Jesus came true, at the time of his suffering and death. If you read Psalm xxii., you will see that David described exactly much of what happened. Verse 1, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” These were the very words Jesus used, you know. Then verses 7, 8, describe how the people spoke of Him as He hung on the cross. “He trusted in God, let Him deliver Him, if He will have Him.” Then verse 18, “They parted my garments among them, and for my raiment they did cast lots.” Now this is what the soldiers did, for we read (John xix. 23): “The soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took his garments, and made four parts, to every soldier a part; and also his coat; now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout. They said

therefore, Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be."

Look again at Psalm lxix. 21, "They gave me gall for my meat, and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink." You remember that this was done. Now find Isaiah liii. That chapter is all about Jesus. It tells us how He was despised and rejected ; how He was wounded and bruised ; that He was numbered with transgressors (that is, crucified with thieves). I might show you many other places in which the sufferings of Jesus were spoken of, but if you remember these, it will be enough at present.

CHAPTER XXXII.

JESUS TAKEN DOWN FROM THE CROSS, AND PUT INTO THE GRAVE.

AND now, I must tell you what happened after the Saviour's death. You have not forgotten that this was the day on which the Passover was killed and eaten. It was a very grand day with the Jews, and the next day was their Sabbath. The Romans used to leave the bodies of those who were crucified until vultures or other birds of prey ate them up. But the Jews did not like that dead bodies should continue hanging there on their Sabbath. They, therefore, came and begged Pilate that they might be taken down. Pilate gave them leave to take down the bodies when their legs had been broken. Then the soldiers broke the legs of the two thieves, who were still alive. When they came to Jesus they found that He was dead already. They did

not, therefore, break his legs. If you look at Exodus xii. 46, you will see that not a bone of the paschal lamb was to be broken. One of the soldiers, however, took a spear, and ran it into the Saviour's side. A stream of blood and water flowed out. Why was this? It was to show the wonderful blessings we have through the death of Jesus;—the blood to atone for sin, the water to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. A prophet had said, "They shall look on Him whom they have pierced." This, too, was fulfilled.

In the evening a rich man named Joseph, of Arimathea, who was a disciple, came to Pilate and begged the body of Jesus. Pilate asked the Roman officer who had been in charge whether Jesus was really dead. This centurion had seen all that had happened, and had been compelled to cry out, "Surely this was the Son of God!" When Pilate heard from him that Jesus was dead, he gave the body to Joseph. Then the body was taken down from the cross. Joseph had brought fine linen, in which he wrapped it.

Nicodemus, too, was there. He had brought a large quantity of spices, weighing a hundred pounds,—this was used for the precious body. Joseph had a new tomb close by, in which no one had yet been laid. Here they laid the Saviour's body, and then rolling a very large stone against the door of the sepulchre, they left it. Several women, too, had been watching all that was done, and they saw where Jesus was laid. When all was over they returned to their own homes. The rest of the day they spent in preparing spices and ointment, and then rested the seventh day, according to the commandment. Do you not think that must have been a very sad day for them? The disciples, too, who had forsaken Jesus, and Peter, who had denied his Lord—what must they have felt?

The next day the Chief Priests and Pharisees remembered some of the things which they had heard Jesus say while He was yet alive. He had said more than once that he should rise again from the dead. These wicked men thought

that perhaps the disciples would come and steal away the body during the night, and then say that the Lord had risen. They begged Pilate would have the sepulchre made very safe, and set a guard of soldiers round it. Pilate gave them leave to do anything they could to make it safe. So they put a seal on the great stone which was at the door, and then set a guard round it. And now they felt they were quite secure, and that they should never hear any more of "this deceiver," as they called Jesus.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

JESUS RISING FROM THE GRAVE.

At last that long, sad day passed away. The Sabbath was over, and those women who loved Jesus so well were watching to catch the first signs of day-light. Jesus, you know, was crucified on a Friday. The day we now keep as a Sabbath was the third day after his death. As soon as the day began to dawn two of these women set off to the tomb, carrying the spices they had prepared. As they went along they were wondering how they should get the stone rolled away, for it was very great. When they reached the place their joy was great to find that it was rolled away. We are told how this was done. An angel had come down and rolled back the stone. But where were the soldiers ? As soon as they saw the angel they were so terrified that they were like dead men. The women were

frightened at first, but the angel soon drove away their fears. "Fear not," said he, "for I know that ye seek Jesus. He is not here; He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay." Then the angel told them to make known to his disciples, *and Peter*, that Jesus was risen from the dead. You may be sure they ran very quickly with this joyful message. Mary Magdalene came first to Peter and John.

They set off in haste, running to the sepulchre. John was first there, and stooping down, he saw the linen clothes lying. He did not go in, but Peter soon followed, and went into the sepulchre. There he saw, indeed, the linen clothes lying folded together; but the body was not there.

By this time Mary Magdalene was come back. She could not yet believe that her dear Lord was alive. She thought some one must have taken Him away. So she sat outside the sepulchre, weeping. Then stooping down, and looking in, she saw two angels, one sitting at the head, the other at the feet where the body of Jesus

had been. The angels asked her why she wept. "Because," said Mary, "they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him." Looking back, she saw a man standing behind her. He asked her why she wept, and whom she was seeking. Mary thought it was the gardener, so she answered, "Oh, Sir, if thou hast taken Him away, tell me where thou hast laid Him." But was it the gardener? Oh, no! it was her Lord himself. Jesus said unto her, "*Mary!*" She knew his beloved voice, and answered, "*Master!*" Oh, how great was her joy! She fell at his feet, and would have embraced Him; but Jesus said, "Touch me not; but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God." Mary ran in haste, and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord. Her words seemed to them like an idle tale. By this time the soldiers who had been placed as a guard round the sepulchre had recovered themselves. They went to the Chief Priests, and told them

all that was done. What were they to do now ? Jesus was certainly risen, and they were afraid many would believe on Him after all. They thought of a wicked plan to prevent this. They gave money to the soldiers, and told them to say that while they were asleep the disciples came and stole away the body. Now this was as foolish as it was wicked : for if they were asleep how could they know who came, or that anyone came at all ?

Well, the same day two of the disciples were walking together to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem. They were talking of the death of Jesus, and of all that they had heard that day. A stranger joined them, and walked with them. He asked what they were talking of so sorrowfully. "What !" said they, "art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not heard the things that have come to pass there ?" "What things ?" the stranger asked. They answered, "About Jesus of Nazareth, a great prophet who has been crucified by the

Chief Priests. This is the third day, too, and some women who were early at the sepulchre, this morning, have told us that the body is not there. They have seen angels, who have said that Jesus is alive.” Then the stranger said to them, “How foolish and slow of heart you are! Do you not know all that the prophets have said about this Jesus?” Then, in a wonderful manner, He explained all the things in the books of Moses, in the Psalms, and Prophets, about the Saviour. When the travellers drew near to Emmaus, they begged their companion to stay all night with them. Soon after, as they were eating their evening meal, He took bread and bless it, and brake, and gave it to them. Ah! do you not begin to think who this wonderful person was? At that moment the disciples’ eyes were opened. They saw that it was Jesus himself. At the same moment He was gone! They were full of joy and wonder, and cried out, “Did not our hearts burn within us, while He talked with us by the way, and while He opened to us the

Scriptures?" Tired as they must have been, and late as it was, they returned back to Jerusalem. There they found the other disciples gathered together rejoicing and saying, "The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon." You may be sure that the two who had walked to Emmaus with Him had much to tell too. While they were still talking (the doors being shut, for fear of the Jews,) Jesus Himself stood in the midst, and said, "Peace be to you." Even now they were affrighted; but Jesus showed them the wounds in his hands and feet. Then asking for something to eat, He took it, and did eat before them. Now one of the disciples (Thomas) was not there when this happened. When the others said to him, "We have seen the Lord," he would not believe that it was really Jesus. "No!" said Thomas, "I will not believe, unless I see in his hands the print of the nails,—and unless I thrust my hand into his side." Eight days afterwards, they were all assembled together again, and Thomas was there too, Jesus again

came into their midst, saying, "Peace be to you." Then said He to Thomas, "Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side." Could Thomas doubt now? Oh, no! He cried out, "My Lord and my God!"

Once more, I must tell you how Jesus showed himself to his disciples. Peter and several others were fishing on the Lake. They were out all night and caught nothing. In the morning they drew near to the shore. Jesus was standing there, but they did not know Him. He called to them, and said, "Children, have ye any meat?" "No!" said they. Then Jesus told them to cast the net on the right side of the ship, and they should find. They obeyed, and now they could not draw it up for the multitude of fishes; after a little time they contrived to drag the net ashore. There were in it a hundred and fifty-three large fishes, and yet the net was not broken. By this time they all saw that it was the Lord. Jesus said unto them, "Come and dine." Then He

took bread, and gave them, and fish likewise. So, when they had dined, Jesus said unto Peter, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these?" Peter answered, "Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee." Jesus said unto him, "Feed my lambs." Three times did Jesus ask him the same question, and each time Peter answered, that indeed he did love his Lord. Jesus told him to feed his sheep and lambs; that is, he was to be employed in preaching the Gospel. Perhaps poor Peter had thought that, after his dreadful sin, he never would be allowed to preach again to others. See how kindly Jesus showed that all was forgiven! He then told Peter that he would die a cruel and painful death. And we read that, in the reign of the wicked Emperor Nero, Peter was condemned to be crucified. We read too, that Peter thought it too great an honor to die exactly as his Lord died. He was therefore crucified with his head downward.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

JESUS ASCENDING INTO HEAVEN.

FORTY days Jesus remained on earth after He rose from the dead. During that time He showed himself to his disciples several times, speaking to them of heavenly things. (Acts i. 8.) At last one day He led them out as far as to Bethany. There He talked with them. He told them to remain at Jerusalem until the Holy Ghost, which He had promised to send to them, should descend upon them. Then, laying his hands on them, He blessed them, and, while they still beheld, He was parted from them, and ascended into heaven. There they stood gazing up after Him, scarcely believing that they should see Him no more. While they were still straining there eyes and looking stedfastly up, two angels stood by them. "Ye men of Galilee," they said, "why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus which

is taken up from you into heaven shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." Then they returned to Jersalem, not mourning, but rejoicing with great joy. Do you wonder that they could rejoice? No doubt they could now remember all the sweet and comforting words which Jesus had spoken to them before his death—how He had said, "In my Father's house are many mansions. I go to prepare a place for you." (John xiv. 2.) Again; "If I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him to you." (John xvi. 7.) They were now constantly in the Temple, praising and blessing God, and waiting for these precious promises to be fulfilled. Perhaps another time I may go on to tell you some of the things which happened to the apostles after Jesus left them.

We have now ended the history of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; but I have one very serious question to ask you before I close. Do you think that these "Lessons about Jesus" have

been blessed to you? You have *heard* a great deal about Jesus, and perhaps you say, “*I like* very much to hear about Him.” Yes, dear children, but that is not enough. Do you not remember in the Parable of the Sower there were some who heard the word “with gladness” (Mark iv. 16), but who never bore any fruit? Do you ask me how you are to know whether the precious seed which has now been sown *is* bearing fruit in you? I will tell you. If God’s Spirit has written on your hearts the blessed things you have heard, you are striving to be every day more like Jesus—you are earnestly praying that all your naughty tempers and evil passions may be changed into meekness and gentleness and patience, like his. You will have learnt, too, what an evil and bitter thing sin is, when nothing but the blood of God’s own dear and perfectly holy Son could atone for it. You will feel the mercy of being able to take all your sins to Jesus, that they may be washed away in his most precious blood. Your hearts will be more and more filled with love to

Him who has loved you so much : you will long to give yourself and all you are to his service now, and you will look forward with earnest desire to that blessed time when this dear Saviour will come again to take you to himself, that where He is, there you may be also !

T H E E N D .



